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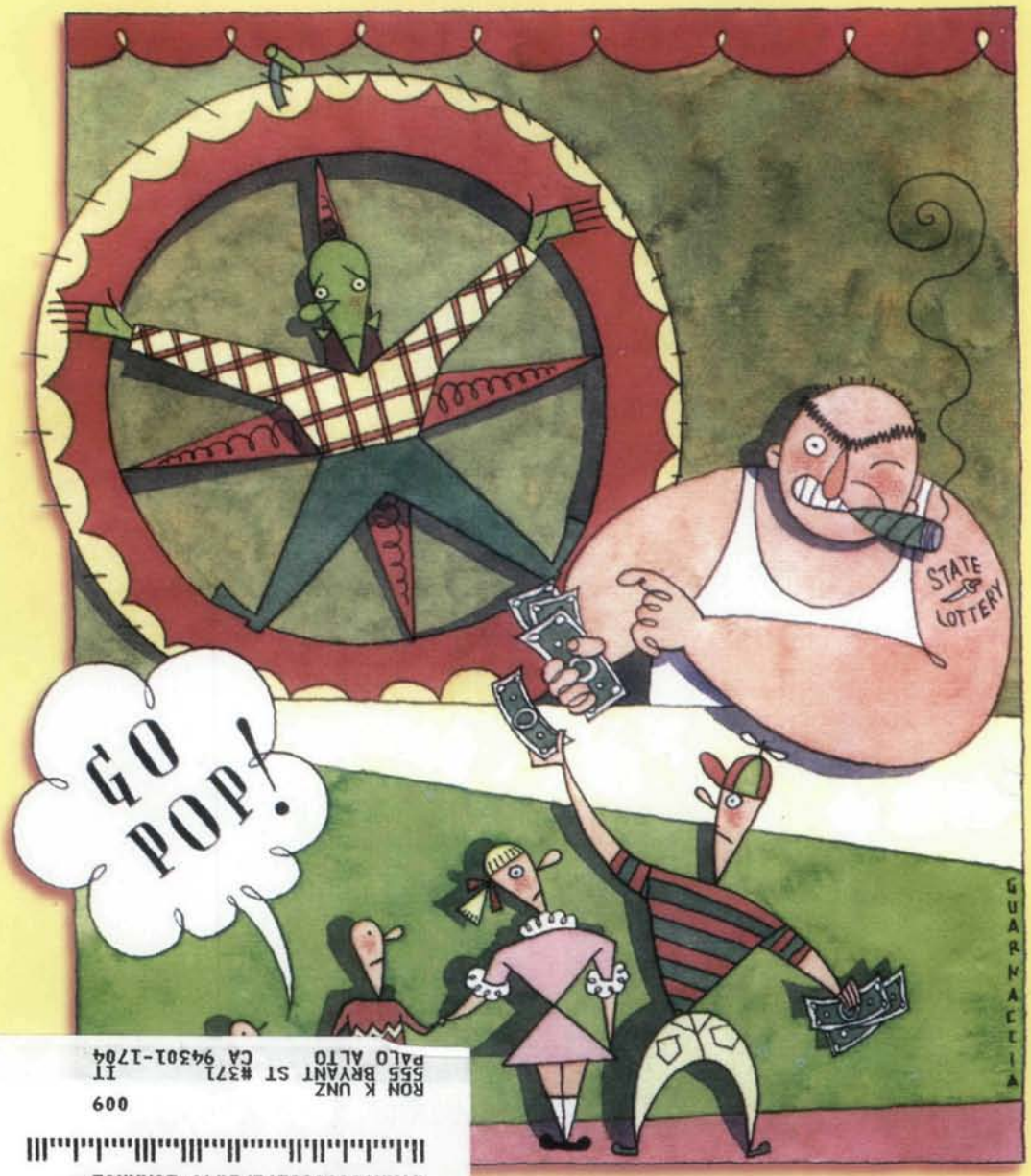

BY ROBYN GEAREY

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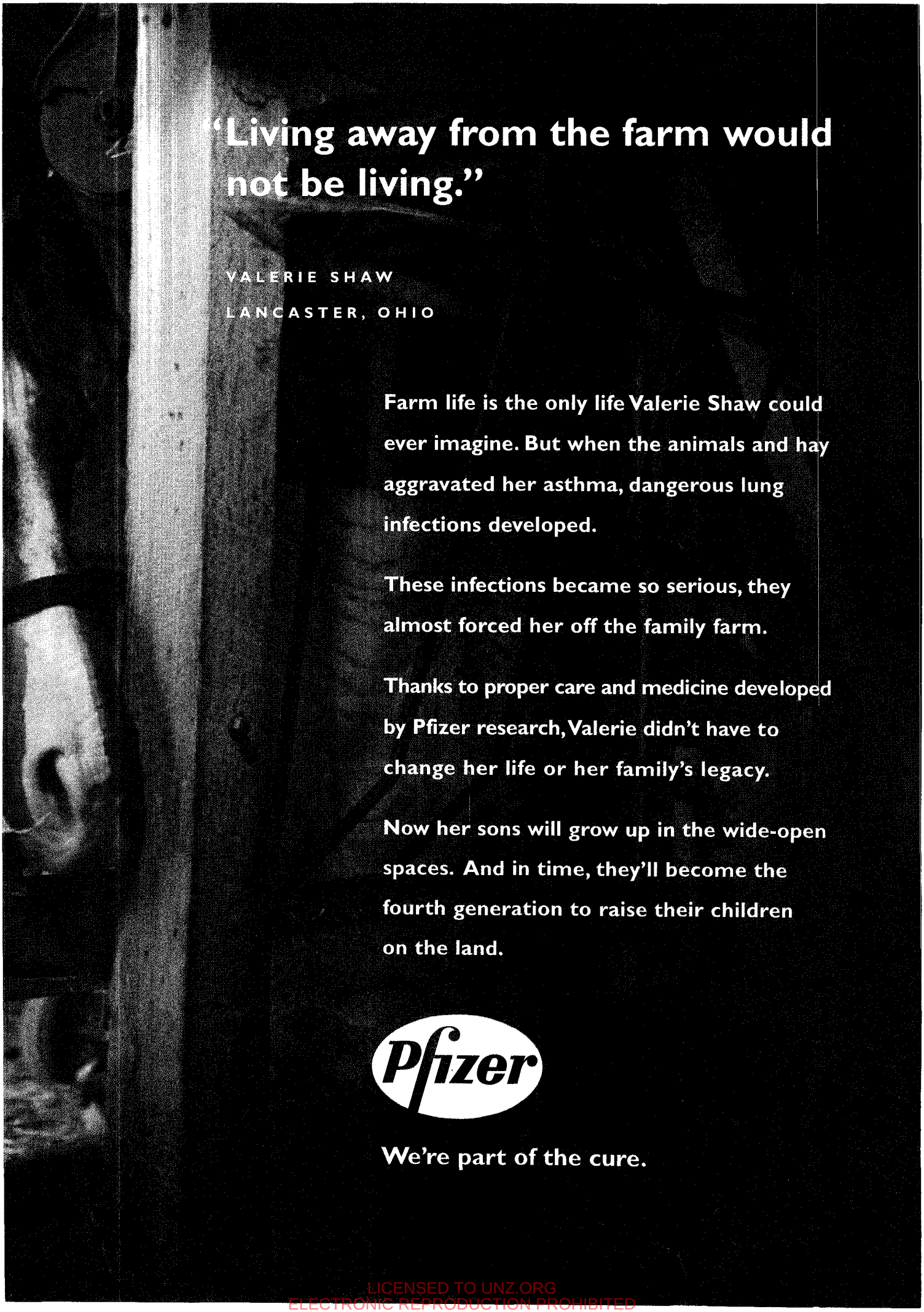
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FROM WASHINGTON

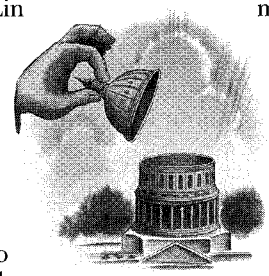
I volunteer

This week, the most meaningful of any in the Clinton era since last week, saw the president and the first lady join forces with other rich people with servants—the Bushes, the Fords, the Carters, the Powells, Oprah Winfrey, John Travolta and Brooke Shields—to demand that the rest of us get up off our fat couch-potato duffs and do something about all the problems that the Clintons, the Bushes, the Fords and the Carters regret to say the government simply does not have the darned resources to deal with, such as cleaning graffiti or sweeping streets or collecting garbage or teaching children.

The ungenerous will point out that we pay the government to do these things. We pay federal income taxes, federal payroll taxes, state income taxes, state property taxes, county property taxes, sales taxes, estate taxes and capital gains taxes. But all these revenues are somehow not enough. So we live in cities like the one where the president lives, where the public schools are generally so bad and so dangerous that only those who have no choice send their children to them, where the police no longer even pretend to solve any but major crimes, where potholes aren't filled and graffiti isn't erased, where the criminal poor prey freely upon the working poor in neighborhoods that are visited occasionally by presidents and first ladies on photo-op tours but otherwise avoided by white people. Much thought has been given to this breakdown of the compact between citizens and government, but it had not previously occurred to anyone that citizens should not only pay for the services of government, but also volunteer to perform them.

This idea is inspiring—and so, in the spirit of Philadelphia, I volunteer, too. I volunteer, again, to lambaste the president and his cronies for putting together the largest pile of dirty money ever seen in one place in politics, and on related topics. Don't thank me. As the president says, we've all got to do our bit, and, with the rest of the piranha press resting up for the fall indictment season, I'll shoulder the burden.

I'm sorry to report that, even as the president was crying in full throat for us all to pitch in, members of his own administration did not seem possessed by the volunteering impulse. Specifically, what they did not want to volunteer was information. In Philadelphia, it was the season of good will; in Washington, it was the season of stonewall. All week, the White House was busy refusing to comply with subpoenas from the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, which is investigating the Clinton fundraising operation. The committee is particularly interested in documents that would shed light on the activities of John Huang and Yah Lin "Charlie" Trie, and Webster Hubbell and former White House official Mark Middleton. The committee needs these documents because Huang, Hubbell and Middleton are so unmoved by the volunteering spirit that they have promised to plead the Fifth, and Trie has gone so far in involuntarism as to voluntarily vacate the country.



The White House's attitude in all this can be measured by the response of Michael McCurry, the president's press secretary. Asked by reporters about public complaints by Representative Dan Burton, chairman of the House committee, that the White House was engaging in "dilatory practices," instead of honestly cooperating with the congressional inquiry, McCurry, *The New York Times* reported, "pulled a quarter from his pocket, flipped it to a reporter and said: 'Here's a quarter. Go call him. Tell him to come on down here, and he can look in any document he wants to.'"

That McCurry should sneer at the law is not really surprising. He is only a spokesman for the administration, and sneering at the law is, on this subject, policy. Attorney General Janet Reno, the nation's chief law enforcement officer, made that clear, once again this week, when she appeared before Congress (she volunteered to, after she was asked) to further explain why an independent counsel is not called for to investigate a fund-raising program supervised by the president and vice president that has already had to return $3 million in suspicious contributions.

The president and the vice president are covered persons under the Independent Counsel Act, which means that if the attorney general has specific, credible evidence they may have been (not *were*, merely *may have been*) involved in violations of the Federal Election Campaign Act or other laws, she has no choice but to appoint an outside counsel. There is a good deal of specific, credible evidence that laws were broken in the fund-raising operation. But Reno says that this evidence does not count, because the millions raised by a White House operation and spent according to White House direction to re-elect Clinton and Gore were not campaign funds.

The idea that the campaign finance law was not broken by collecting illegal contributions or committing illegalities, because the contributions were given a little rinse and spin, strikes even some Clintonite Democrats as outrageous. Reno's interpretation "is not only legally wrong but also disastrous as a matter of policy," Philip B. Heymann, a Clinton-appointed deputy attorney general in 1993 and 1994, recently wrote in *Newsday*. "The whole structure of campaign-giving limitations that we have so carefully created can be bypassed by simply having contribution checks written to the Democratic or Republican National Committees—an obvious form of money laundering to soften hard money." No matter, says Reno. "I am unable to agree, based on the facts and the law, that an independent counsel should be appointed to handle this investigation." She volunteered no further elaboration on her rationale in her prepared testimony.

The Philadelphia spirit is also lacking in the office of the White House counsel, which is still resisting a congressional subpoena to turn over notes concerning Hillary Clinton's involvement in the disappearance and mysterious reappearance of Rose Law Firm billing records. The volunteering impulse is also missing in the offices of Assistant U.S. Attorney Bruce R. Hegyi and U.S. Attorney Eric Holder, who on April 28 filed a brief arguing against efforts to force the Commerce Department to make available under the Freedom of Information Act information pertaining to whether former Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown "sold seats on trade missions to big contributors to the Democratic Party."

May we remind all these parsimonious souls that, as Hillary Rodham Clinton said in Philadelphia, it is the commitment to giving that "makes America the strongest and best nation in the history of the world." But maybe the skeptics are right. There are some problems that can't be solved by volunteering. Sooner or later you need the government.

MICHAEL KELLY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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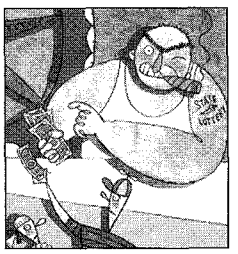

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CORRESPONDENCE

Irish nays

To the editors:

Robert Brustein writes palpable nonsense in "The Rebirth of Irish Drama" (April 7) when he says, "It was [Robert] Flaherty who later told John Millington Synge about the verbal splendors to be found among these islanders, converting this would-be Bohemian expatriate ... into the national playwright of Ireland." It was not Flaherty but William Butler Yeats, national poet of Ireland, who did all that, and it was done in 1896 when Flaherty was only 12. Flaherty was only 14 when Synge first visited the islands in 1898, and 25 when Synge died in 1909.

DAVID R. CLARK
Sequim, Washington

Hats off

To the editors:

As a freshman congressman, I agree wholeheartedly with Jennifer Bradley's observations in "Capitol Flight" (April 7). Thomas Jefferson was one of the original proponents of a citizen-Congress, but he would have been alarmed had the deliberative work in Washington, D.C., been supplanted by constituent service in the districts. The only way to become proficient at both is to devote proper time and attention to each. It's no good playing one off against the other. In fact, mastering the intricacies of legislation can only help a member serve his constituency.

WALTER CAPPS
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Tragic history

To the editors:

In "Black Bread" (March 31) Richard Pipes made a number of ill-considered statements about my book, *A People's Tragedy*, that question my integrity as a scholar. He claimed that I made "unattributed borrowings" from his two-volume work on the Russian Revolution and implied that I might have made similar borrowings from others. He cited seven sentences, where he says I drew on his opinions without attribution.

Here are the seven examples, as quoted by Pipes in TNR, filling in his ellipses with omitted words italicized. (Note: PT is *A People's Tragedy*; RUBR is Pipes's *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime*; and RR is Pipes's *The Russian Revolution.*)

1. *And* our story ends in 1924, with the death of Lenin, by which time *the revolution had come full circle* and the basic institutions, if not all the practices, of the Stalinist regime were in place. (PT, p. xv)

The book concludes with the death of Lenin in January 1924, by which time all the institutions and nearly all the practices of the future Stalinism were in place. (RUBR, p. xvii)

2. No other country in the world had two kinds of police—one to protect the interests of the state, the other to protect its people. (PT, p. 124)

The Department of Police was unique to Russia: only Russia had two kinds of police, one to protect the interests of the state, the other to maintain law and order among the citizens. (RR, p. 74)

ST. BOYDEN THE PURE—HANNA ROSIN
THE NEW REPUBLIC
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BY MARGARET TALBOT

3. The Law of Succession made it clear that the Russian throne was "not the Emperor's private property nor his patrimony to be disposed of according to his will," *but descended automatically to his eldest son.* (PT, p. 344)

"The Russian throne [was] not the emperor's private property nor his patrimony [*votchina*] to dispose of according to his own free will." (RR, p. 314)

4. This at last was mutiny: having been denounced as a rebel, Kornilov chose to rebel ... [*Footnote 80: Pipes,* The Russian Revolution, *459-60*] (PT, p. 451)

This, at last, was mutiny: *Kornilov later admitted that he had decided on an open break with the government because he had been accused by it of open rebellion—that is, treason. Golovin believes that by his actions Kerensky provoked Kornilov to rebel: the assessment is correct in the sense that* Kornilov rebelled only after having been charged with rebelling. (RR, p. 460)

5. *Nekrasov recalled that* Kerensky *had* said: "I will not give them the revolution"—as if it had been his to give. (PT, p. 451)

By breaking with Kornilov, Kerensky could pose as champion of the Revolution: according to Nekrasov, during the night meeting of the cabinet, Kerensky said, "I will not give them the Revolution"—as if it were his to give or keep. (RR, p. 457)

6. The Cheka was a state within a state. (PT, p. 631)

By 1920, Soviet Russia had become a police state in the sense that the security police, virtually a state within the state, *spread its tentacles to all Soviet institutions, including those that managed the economy.* (RR, p. 829)

7. *Although, of course,* it must never be forgotten that while many revolutionaries were Jews, relatively few Jews were revolutionaries. (PT, p. 82 note)

It must never be forgotten *that during the Revolution and Civil War, the Bolshevik party was very much a minority party, a self-selected body whose membership did not reflect the politics of the population: Lenin admitted that the Communists were a drop of water in the nation's sea. In other words,* while not a few Communists were Jews, few Jews were Communists. (RUBR, p. 113)

Once the italicized words are restored, the falsity of Pipes's claims becomes apparent. This is particularly clear in example 7. His "it must never be forgotten" belongs to an entirely different sentence, and on this basis one could accuse virtually any book of borrowing from any other. Mine, on the other hand, was intended to echo the Holocaust refrain—an emphasis made clear by the next sentence: "It was a myth of the anti-Semites that all the Jews were Bolsheviks."

In examples 3 and 5, Professor Pipes and I are both citing from the same Russian sources, so one would expect them to be similar. In example 4, Pipes wrongly claims that I failed to acknowledge him. I did in footnote 80. Is this his only error? Or are there more among the other unspecified number of similarities he claims to have found?

The pettiness of Pipes's charges is well illustrated by examples 2 and 6. In each case what I wrote is commonplace, a cliché such as one might find in any student essay, and my only crime is not to have done better. The same is true of the "institutions and practices" of example 1 and of the common phrasing in example 7. These are the sort of verbal riffs that are bound to be found in almost any book. Yet Pipes claims sole authorship. No doubt there are other such examples where Pipes and I have stated basic facts in a similar expression. This is unavoidable.

Finally, in example 1 there is a superficial similarity of phrasing, but the meaning of my sentence is very different from that of his, and anyone who reads them carefully will see that I am, in effect, tak-

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ing issue with him. Professor Pipes is saying that, by 1924, "nearly all the practices" of the Stalinist regime (e.g. mass murder) were in place, whereas I am saying that they weren't (i.e. that the regime had the institutions of mass murder at its disposal but did not yet practice it). This is quite a difference.

I do not wish to enter into a feud with Pipes. But this is not the first time that he has tried to discredit me. For example, in his review of my earlier book, *Peasant Russia, Civil War*, he pronounced in the *Times Literary Supplement* (March 23-29, 1990) that the only reason I had been given so much access to the Soviet archives was that I was one of those Western scholars who "tend to fall under the spell of Marxism-Leninism and to adopt, quite unconsciously, the main tenets of Communist historiography." I did not respond then. But the allegations that he now makes against me are so serious that I must defend myself.

ORLANDO FIGES
Cambridge, England

Richard Pipes replies:

I fail to see how padding unattributed borrowings with the sentences in which they are embedded makes them less unattributed borrowings.

Figes ignores that in my review I mixed high praise of his descriptive talents with substantive criticism of his poor analytic abilities and inattention to the Russian Revolution's international aspects. I called him a "gifted historian," "bold and imaginative," which I would hardly have done were I bent on discrediting him. The charge that he quoted me frequently without giving credit constituted a minor part of the review.

The sentence from my review of his book seven years ago that he cites is taken out of context. It comes from a review of two books, one of them his. It was not addressed to him personally but to a whole school of Western "revisionist" historians. It did not say that "the reason he gained access to Soviet archives" was that he came "under the spell of Marxism-Leninism," which hints at corruptibility. What it said was that historians who had gained such access tended "quite unconsciously" to fall in step with Communist historiography. This merely implies susceptibility.

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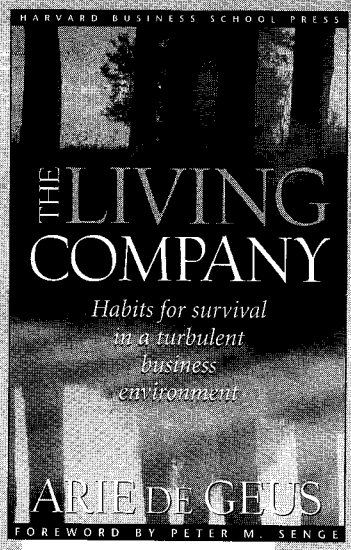
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MAY 19, 1997

OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

Some Republican senators, still unreconciled to President Clinton's re-election, are seeking to prevent him from discharging his constitutional duty to appoint federal judges. The Senate Republican Conference this week defeated a proposal by Senator Phil Gramm of Texas that would have allowed a two-thirds majority of GOP senators in any given judicial circuit to veto nominees to the federal appellate bench. But obstructionism is still in the air: the Republican Conference voted ominously to "respond legislatively to judicial activism." The Senate Judiciary Committee, furthermore, has not scheduled hearings on any of Clinton's outstanding nominees to the federal appellate courts, many of whom are being attacked on the floor of the Senate as "judicial activists." And the increasingly out-there Robert Bork, having recently abandoned his proposal for legislative override of judicial decisions as insufficiently radical, now says he wants to end judicial review entirely.

This magazine, long a supporter of liberal judicial restraint, has no sympathy for judicial activism. And that is why we consider it an editorial imperative to emphasize that the Republican attacks are intellectually incoherent and constitutionally subversive. One of President Clinton's most notable achievements in office has been to wean the Democrats of their attachment to judicial activism. Instead of applauding this achievement, the Republicans are politicizing the judiciary in a poisonous way.

The current wave of judicial bashing began in November, when *First Things*, a journal of religious opinion, published "The End of Democracy?," a symposium decrying judicial activism. Many conservatives at the time predicted that liberal judges would soon strike down the California Civil Rights Initiative and invent a constitutional right to die. Both predictions are being proved false. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has recently upheld Proposition 209; and, in June, the Supreme Court will almost certainly decline to recognize a constitutional right to die.

A recent study by the libertarian Institute for Justice confirms the absurdity of GOP charges that Clinton's Supreme Court nominees are avatars of judicial activism. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer are *more* restrained and *less* likely to strike down federal and state laws involving economic and civil liberties than any of their Republican colleagues. Both voted to limit the power of government in about 35 percent of the relevant cases, compared to the most activist Justice, the Reagan-appointed Anthony Kennedy, who voted to second-guess the political branches 85 percent of the time.

The GOP attacks on pending appellate court nominees are similarly spurious. Consider the case of William Fletcher, nominated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit last year. Fletcher, a law professor at the University of California at Berkeley, is a moderate Democrat and one of the most respected scholars of federal jurisdiction in the country. Republicans dislike his more liberal mother, Betty Fletcher, who sits on the Ninth Circuit; and, under pressure from Utah Senator Orrin Hatch last spring, Judge Fletcher agreed to take "senior status" on the day her son's commission was signed.

A band of partisan senators, led by John Ashcroft of Missouri, has now decided to Bork Professor Fletcher on the basis of a single sentence from an article that Fletcher published in the *Yale Law Journal* in 1982. In the article, Fletcher took the conservative and restrained position that, because remedies designed by trial courts are "presumptively illegitimate," courts should resist the urge to design them "unless the political bodies that ordinarily should do so are in such serious and chronic default that there is realistically no other choice." Misrepresenting Fletcher's criticism of discretion in the hands of trial judges as an endorsement of discretion in the hands of appellate judges, Ashcroft told the Heritage Foundation on March 18 that Fletcher "feels judges should be able to use what he calls 'discretionary' powers to achieve desired policy goals."

Distortions this crude would be amusing if they weren't so serious. There are eight appellate nominees now in limbo before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and none has been scheduled for a hearing because of nakedly partisan opposition on the right. It is disgraceful that the usual voices of responsible conservatism have not found the courage to say publicly what they must know privately: there is no epidemic of liberal judicial activism. The president's nominees are moderate and unobjectionable. The terms of debate on the courts have shifted, and the Republicans have won. And their only response to this historic victory has been to politicize the confirmation process beyond recognition. This is an ugly turn the Republicans have taken, and it will return to haunt them for years to come. •

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NOTEBOOK

SET IN STONE: Even after President Clinton announced last week that a statue of Franklin D. Roosevelt seated in a wheelchair would be added to the new FDR Memorial, the National Organization on Disability refused to cancel its protest of the May 2 dedication. "They are trying to steal him from us," one organizer told *The Washington Post.* Alas, identity politics has come to bronze. And marble and granite. Nearby, in the Capitol, Georgia Democrat Cynthia McKinney and the National Political Congress of Black Women are mounting a campaign to prevent the movement of a thirteen-ton, pasty-white bust of three woman suffragists into the Rotunda because it doesn't include black suffragist Sojourner Truth. Never mind that McKinney once supported the display—which will displace a statue of religious freedom advocate Roger Williams with one of Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. And, in another recent incident, several Muslim groups called for the sandblasting of a 66-year-old frieze on the north wall of the Supreme Court's chamber, saying the depiction of Mohammed standing among other lawgivers violated Islamic tradition. The high-minded moan that Americans have lost interest in the arts? Would that it were so.

ADIÓS, AMIGO: In an effort to prove his bipartisan credentials, Bill Clinton is bringing yet another Republican into his administration—Massachusetts Governor William Weld as ambassador to Mexico. Why not? Weld had a distinguished career prosecuting international drug kingpins before taking over the Bay State and earned a reputation for being tough on crime as governor. And when it comes to certifying Mexico's dubious fight against drugs, the Clinton administration could use a Republican to represent it on Capitol Hill. There is, however, another motive: get Weld the hell outta Boston. According to sources on both sides of the aisle, Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy pushed to uproot the popular patrician governor after he made noises about running for another term, potentially spoiling the ambitions of Kennedy's nephew, Joe. Also no doubt pleased by the nomination was Vice President Al Gore, who thus gets a potential (if not terribly threatening) 2000 nemesis parked south of the border. The next stroke in the White House's bipartisan diplomatic offensive: George W. Bush to Mongolia.

THE EXTERMINATOR: Texas senator and fiscal ultraconservative Phil Gramm worries that his party's congressional leadership is going soft in the head in its budget negotiations with President Clinton. So, to head off creeping appeasement, Gramm announced last week that he and nine conservative GOP senators would oppose any budget deal that "violates our fundamental principles." "Spending money is popular," Gramm inveighed. "Republicans like to spend money, as Democrats do." Gramm would know. Two days before scolding his leaders for their temptation to spend, he unveiled a $16 million program to fight fire ants in Texas.

FUND-RAISING PIETY WATCH: In the weeks leading up to last November's election, with revelations about Democratic fund-raising foul-ups dominating the headlines, Republican National Committee Chairman Haley Barbour took to the airwaves to express his outrage. "This is not Republicans versus Democrats," he intoned. "This is right versus wrong." As disclosure tumbled upon disclosure, Barbour saved his harshest words for the Democrats' freewheeling solicitation of foreign contributions. On October 22, he blasted the Clinton White House for trying to "cover up" what he dubbed a "well-organized scheme of foreign contributions and influence peddling." A week later, at a Washington press conference, he reproached the Dems for their attempts "to shake down foreign businesses and governments for money." When a reporter asked Barbour how he could be certain that investigators wouldn't "find the same basic sorts of acts happening at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue," the then-head of the Republican Party responded with wounded innocence. "Well," he declared, "I can just tell you, you won't." Well, they did. In this week's *Time* magazine, Michael Weisskopf and Michael Duffy report that, as chairman of the RNC, Barbour—now a Washington lobbyist—forged an Asian money trail of his own. On two separate occasions, *Time* reports, Barbour relied on the extraordinary largesse of Ambrous Tung Young, a Hong Kong businessman with interests pending in Congress, to bail the party out of a tight spot. According to *Time,* Tung Young first ponied up a $2 million loan guarantee in the critical days before the 1994 Republican takeover of Congress. Then, in the final weeks of the '96 presidential contest, he agreed to swallow $500,000 in bad GOP debts. The crucial funds were funneled through the National Policy Forum—a Barbour-led "think tank" set up to lure corporate cash into the party—then shoveled furiously into a number of tight congressional races around the country. Barbour insists he did nothing improper, but the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee is subpoenaing his records anyway. It is, after all, a matter of right versus wrong.

THE HARD COVERS, THE HARD QUESTIONS: We are pleased to announce the appearance of *We Are All Multiculturalists Now,* by Nathan Glazer (Harvard University Press); *Coming Apart: A Memoir of the Harvard Wars of 1969,* by Roger Rosenblatt (Little Brown); *Same-Sex Marriage: Pro and Con, A Reader,* edited with an introduction by Andrew Sullivan (Vintage); and *On Toleration,* by Michael Walzer (Yale University Press). We are also pleased to welcome Glenn C. Loury, Professor of Economics at Boston University and author of *One By One From the Inside Out* (Free Press), to the group of deep thinkers who write our column "The Hard Questions." •

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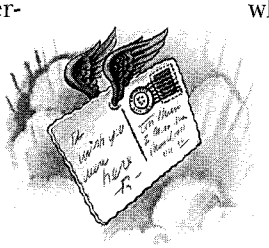
CONEJOS COUNTY POSTCARD

SHTETLERS

By Florence Williams

It's where God and livestock meet. In the 1850s, Hispanic Catholics moved to Colorado's San Luis Valley from New Mexico, herding flocks of sheep and building adobe churches. Soon after, Anglo cattlemen arrived carrying the Book of Mormon. Today, the Connecticut-sized valley is home to the ranching descendants of both groups, with a few crystal worshipers, Methodists and one Japanese Buddhist buffalo rancher sprinkled in.

But in Conejos County, at the valley's southern end between the Rio Grande River and the mountainous New Mexico border, San Luis's theistic tableau has taken an exotic twist: the Jews have come to Marlboro country. Last November, facing drought and a desperately bad cattle market, a consortium of 108 Hispanic and Mormon ranchers decided to try producing kosher beef. They may not know much about *milchig* and *fleishig*, but they know they can market properly vetted kosher tenderloin and brisket to California and New York, where it fetches 20 percent more per pound than the secular stuff.



So, Rabbis Raziel Amar and David Ganz came to live in La Jara, population 1,200. Emissaries of the Baltimore-based Star K Kosher Certification Company, they work in the slaughterhouse down the road from the La Jara car wash. The rabbis bless the meat and prepare it according to Talmudic law, making the Ranchers' Choice cooperative the only kosher processing plant west of Nebraska. It produces 12,000 pounds of kosher beef and 1,600 pounds of kosher lamb per week.

The rabbis are, to put it mildly, lonely. "You're from New York? You Jewish? Why you leave New York?" says Rabbi Amar excitedly upon learning that I, too, hail from the East Coast. Rabbi Amar is bearded, thin and speaks with a thick Israeli accent, while Ganz, from Philadelphia, is plumper, older and speaks with a Yiddish lilt. I visit them at their trailer-office, where they are taking a break from what is called, matter-of-factly, the kill floor. But soon a cowboy-booted, barrel-chested man lumbers into the room. This is Elipio Mercure, assistant manager of the cooperative. He claps his hands. "Back to work! Back to work!"

"Lunch!" calls Rabbi Amar to me as he hurries out. "You will come for lunch!"

Mercure, a third-generation Hispanic native of the valley, rolls his eyes. "These guys. They're costing me so much money! I pay them $400 a day. Each." He sits heavily in a big chair behind his desk. The cooperative, he explains, is having financial problems—largely because the rabbis reject half of the animals as blemished, and therefore unkosher. Puzzled by why the rabbis are so strict when the U.S. Department of Agriculture is so lax, Mercure shakes his head and gets philosophical. "I'm 57 years old. I'd heard and read about Jews all my life, but I'd never been involved with them before. I'm learning a lot. We had to accommodate all their praying and stuff. They won't work Saturdays. In a way it's a pain in the butt, but it's also admirable." He shrugs, then suddenly looks up. "Hey, don't you want to see the killing?" He draws his index finger in a line across his neck and makes a gurgling sound.

We don hard hats and lab coats and walk onto the kill floor, which is carpeted with blood and pieces of flesh. Rabbi Amar is sharpening his knife, an eighteen-inch-long *chaliph*. I watch a brown cow get herded through a door and into a cage. A man clips a metal ring to the animal's nostrils and hoses down the massive furry neck. With great concentration, the rabbi swiftly slices the cow's jugular, inspects the knife, then turns to address me. I try not to notice the twitching beast next to us. "Don't you want to take photos?" he asks, looking disappointed when I hesitate. Two men in rubber boots and white jackets hook the cow, now technically a carcass, onto a medieval-looking pulley and peel off its hide like a banana. Amar dives his hands into the animal's gaping neck, explaining that he is inspecting the lungs for lesions that might indicate respiratory infection, a common problem in the high, dry valley. Then the men split the carcass with a chain saw and splash the cow's four stomachs onto a rolling "gut cart." Soon, Amar will check the contents for nails and pieces of wire. A kosher cow must be completely healthy and metal-free. Even then, only the front quarters are acceptable. "Like a doctor checking his patient, I check the cows," says Amar, now waving a smaller knife. "I also get paid like a doctor."

"I love meat!" says Rabbi Amar, preparing a lunch of microwaved beef sausage and chicken back at the house he and Rabbi Ganz share. "Especially rib steak, and side steak and skirt steak, what you call tenderloin. Ah! It's good to have a guest." Amar is 27 and sees his wife and three children in Brooklyn every other weekend. Weekends in between, the rabbis drive a borrowed Buick four hours to attend synagogue in Denver.

"Why don't you bring your family out here?" I ask.

"Who're you kidding?" says Amar, who hails from Jerusalem by way of New York City. "My wife thinks Brooklyn is the boonies. She wants to move to Manhattan."

Ganz is more content. "It's absolutely magnificent out here. I love the mountains." Does he miss his wife, too? "Oh, yes, I miss her, what's her name?" He laughs heartily.

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Back at the plant, we run into rancher Arnold Mortensen, whose cow I met this morning. Amar is effusive. "Your cows are fantastic! Sixty percent kosher! You're very lucky. You should bless God." Mortensen looks pleased. After the rabbis return to work, he tells me he hopes the co-op will help stabilize the local ranching business, which has suffered from volatile wholesale beef prices.

"You know," says Mortensen, a third-generation local Mormon, "the Mormons and the Jews have a lot in common. We're both family oriented; we have similar morals about working hard and modesty in dress and abstinence before marriage." It occurs to me he probably thinks all Jews wear black and carry special utensils.

Mortensen hopes the co-op will follow through on plans to expand its repertoire to include kosher pastrami, kosher jerky and even kosher buffalo. In his eyes, Jews have been one of the best things to happen to Conejos County in years. He squints at me from under his cowboy hat. "I hear you're half Jewish," he says. Around here, word gets around.

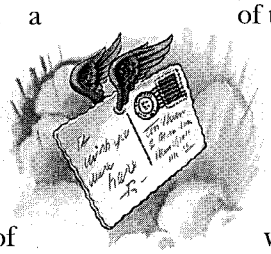
FLORENCE WILLIAMS is a writer in western Colorado.

NEW YORK POSTCARD

ROOTS

By Lillian Ross

Shall we hear it, for a change, for the good, stalwart public servant? New York City had at least two, but one, August Heckscher, died, at the age of 83, the other day. August Heckscher was born to, as they used to say, a position in life, in 1913 arriving in a family whose wealth was inherited from Heckscher's grandfather and namesake, a financier and philanthropist who was a great benefactor of parks. When the latter August Heckscher grew up, and also went into the parks line, he liked to wear his maternal grandfather's alpaca overcoat. He was an informal man—he was known familially as well as publicly as "Augie"—and also a man of eclectic interests. He was, over the course of his life, an educator, author, printer (he had his own press, "High Loft," up in Maine), environmentalist, city planner and civic leader. Augie was part of the 1945 United States delegation at the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco. He wrote editorials for *The New York Herald Tribune* in the 1950s; he worked at the White House for President Kennedy in the early 1960s; he wrote books with titles like *To the Public Happiness* in the 1970s; and he published a biography of Woodrow Wilson in 1991. He didn't like riding in his official car; he usually took the bus. He was a trustee of museums and schools. He founded CIVITAS, a unique volunteer citizens group devoted to improving—with zoning and planning and good housing—the quality of life in endangered urban environments.



But Augie's most important identity was this: he was a partisan of Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape architect who, with Calvert Vaux, designed Central Park in the 1850s. Augie's love for Olmsted's vision led him to his most memorable job, that of New York City's Commissioner of Parks from 1967 to 1972. A few months before he died, Augie wrote to a young man who had just gone to work for the Parks Department, saying: "You are working in a great place where I spent some of my happiest and most challenging years." It was Augie's concern that the parks be, as he put it, "full of people and full of life." In his tenure as commissioner, he sponsored concerts and marathons and theaters and peace demonstrations. With then-Mayor John Lindsay's active encouragement, he resurrected some of Olmsted's ideas for expanding the use of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, making it more accessible to and more exciting for the public.

Above all, though, Augie sponsored trees. He regarded his job, it sometimes seemed, as a sort of middleman, or ambassador, between New York and the great arboreal world outside. He brought in trees to the city in the way, in those days, public relations men brought in starlets—wonderful trees: trees of classic American beauty and trees of exotic and foreign origin. Augie adored the trees, he relished them.

One lovely spring day in 1972, as a reporter for *The New Yorker*, I came to watch him—a jaunty fellow with a short, graying beard and wearing a dark suit—plant an English oak in a small, wooded area in Central Park, just north of the sailboat pond, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Olmsted. Only five people turned up for the planting, but Augie regarded them joyously, as though they were the masses assembled in St. Peter's Square. "Did you hear the good news?" he said to the tiny assemblage. "This morning George Delacorte gave us $5,000 to plant trees. That will buy us a lot of trees. Maybe some cucumber trees, in the magnolia family, or some sugar maples. We have one cucumber tree left in the park, but it's an old one, and now it's on its last legs."

He was in no rush to plant the oak. He asked if anyone knew what a "dawn redwood" was. Negative. He volunteered that it was "a conifer, but it loses its needles." It was supposedly extinct for 40 million years, Augie said, but in 1941 it was found in China. His Parks people, Augie said, had planted some in the city. He said he'd like to get some "private money" for planting more trees. He looked affectionately at the new oak—twenty feet tall, approximately four inches in diameter—standing at the ready, roots wrapped in burlap, in its hole. Eventually, Augie picked up a spade and threw dirt against the base of the tree. "I don't know how someone

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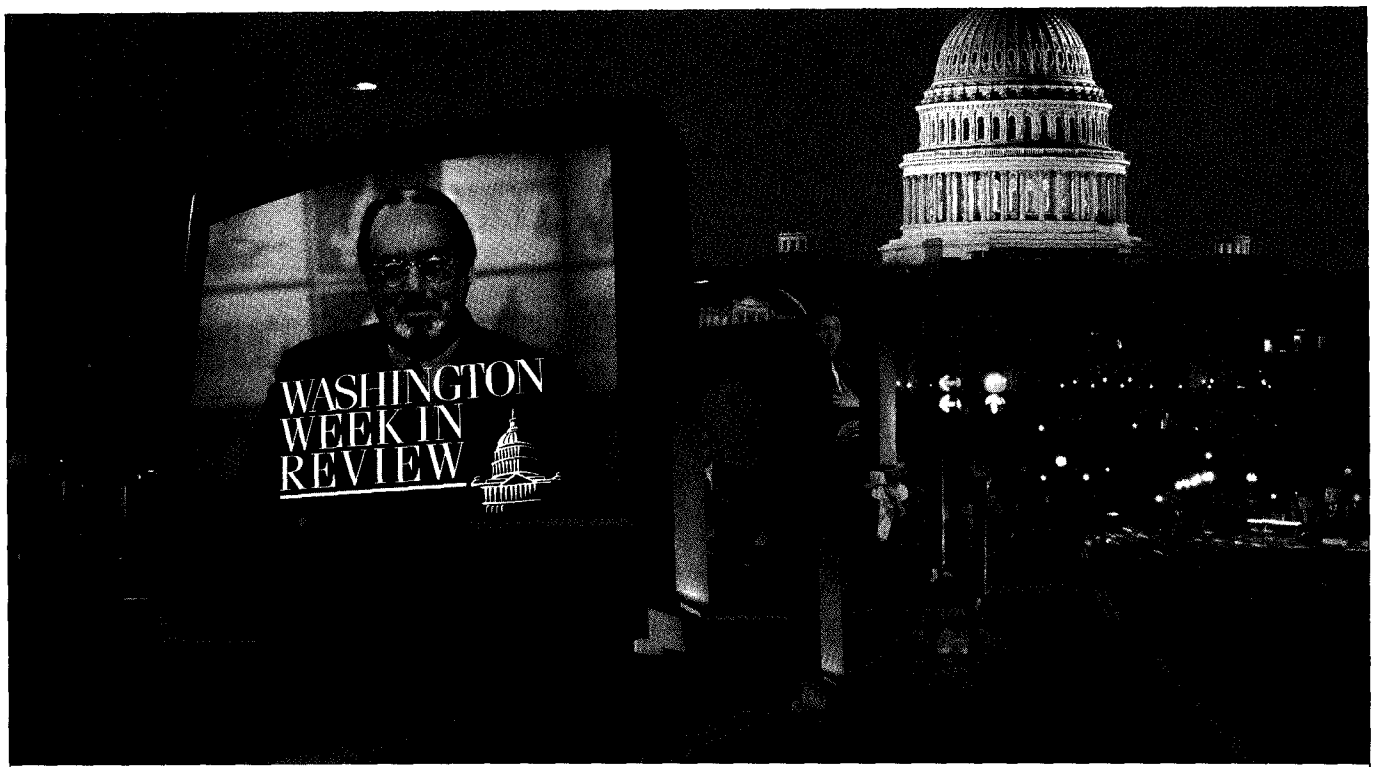
who *has* money can get more pleasure than by giving it for trees and flowers in our parks," Augie said.

The current New York City Parks Commissioner is Henry Stern. He was Parks Commissioner from 1983 to 1990, and after a four-year hiatus, during which he worked as president of the Citizens Union, he returned to Parks. Like Augie, he is a trustee of museums and busy with cultural and civic organizations. He worked for a Democratic mayor and now works for a Republican mayor. In the 1960s, as a city administrator, Stern worked for Augie, advising him on policy issues. Stern has pushed Augie's philosophy of people-in-the-parks and parks-to-the-people to greater dimensions than ever before with seasonally inspired events ("Easter Eggstravaganza," winter carnivals); holiday ceremonies (Washington's Birthday at the Morris-Jumel Mansion); new and restored monuments (a larger-than-life bronze of Eleanor Roosevelt, a big marble sculpture of Giuseppe Verdi and his opera characters Falstaff, Othello, Aida and Leonora); and frequent environmental reminders (an Earth Day tribute to the pioneering parks conservationist John Muir, who died the year after Augie was born). A few days ago, Stern presided over a quarter-century-later echo of Augie's oak tree planting, the rooting of 175 celebratory plants in Central Park's Olmsted Flower Beds.

Like Augie, Stern is idiosyncratic. He invented the practice of giving names, called "handles," to his staff and friends of the Parks Commission. As of last week, he had come up with 1,997 handles, every one of which, it seems, he knows by heart. He addresses the recipients as "Northside," "Horizon," "Chipmunk," "Canary," "Watchdog," "Cruncher," "Scampi," "Sandpiper" and "StarQuest"—this last one for himself. StarQuest is Augielian in his feelings about trees. He coined the word "arboricide" for the crime of killing trees, and he gives each new Parks worker a copy of Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees." The poem is recited at nearly all public events.

Twenty-five years practically to the day after Augie's oak tree planting, Central Park's cherry and magnolia trees were exploded in impatient bloom. The Sheep Meadow and the Great Lawn were newly and gloriously green. Augie had died a few days earlier. Stern, wearing a rumpled, well-worn gray suit and a rumpled, well-worn greenish shirt with a blue-colored necktie bearing figures of trees and elephants, left his office at The Arsenal (whose name is taken from its former function) and went out to Central Park with a couple of aides to check on Augie's oak. StarQuest dawdled dreamily until he stopped to look at a couple of trees just outside of the building. Then he snapped to it. He carefully examined neat little labels pinned to a honey locust and to a pagoda tree. "*Gleditsia triacanthos*," he said. "*Sophora japonica*."

Augie's oak tree was where he had planted it, just west of Pilgrim Hill. It had grown twice as high—to forty feet. Stern got a measuring tape, and his aides measured the tree's diameter, which was now forty-two inches. It was a columnar English oak, said Stern, a *quercus*. It had been



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pruned recently, but it had a small canker halfway up one side. Quoting James Joyce from memory, Stern said that cancer is a disease of animals, canker a disease of plants. The tree was leaning slightly to one side. Stern said that it had to lean to get some sun because a big shingle oak, twenty-five feet away, was shading it. He put the tape measure in his pocket and walked slowly away.

"Now," said StarQuest, "we're going to plant two young tulip trees—for Augie."

LILLIAN ROSS is the author of *Picture* (Modern Library) and a longtime staff writer at *The New Yorker.*

Volunteerism, the movie.

BLAH-BLAH

By Hanna Rosin

PHILADELPHIA

In Clintonism, as in life, it's the little things that count, and they not only count, they are infused with grave import. So it is that the president finds himself on a sunny morning in Philadelphia reading Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* to five tots on tiny plastic chairs. The reading circle is tucked away in a corner several feet away from the big black cameras set to zoom, out of earshot of the scary press monster, for whom this tableau has been staged. Clinton seems happy; the "good father," as his imagists call it, is a favorite role. The kids listen with rapt attention, except for one who is busy watching a ladybug crawl on his finger.

This is not merely about reading; it is about something much larger, something called "civic society," about building connections between people like Clinton and people like the five kids growing up in one of the scariest, lousiest neighborhoods in America. As Clinton will repeat over and over during the three-day Presidents' Summit for America's Future, in prose that reaches for history and grasps banality, this is about a New Citizenship, about "reaching across all these racial and religious and ethnic lines that divide us and coming together, making our diversity a great asset in this global world of ours."

As the ladybug crawls, the volunteers wilt. They have come by the thousands to gather in Marcus Foster Stadium, and they have come to do something, to paint over graffiti, pick up trash, pluck out weeds, *anything* to beautify an implacably ugly stretch of Germantown Avenue, a dysfunctional street in a dysfunctional community absurdly called Nicetown. Many have come from far out west on red-eye flights, and have been standing in the sun since the 6 a.m. sign-up. But it is almost noon, and they have yet to lift a paintbrush. They have seen Clinton trade his crutches for a paint roller, Colin Powell trade his button-down for a T-shirt, Al Gore don a tool belt, Hillary Clinton put on white weeding gloves. They have heard a half-dozen speeches. But, with only three hours left of clean-up time, they haven't done any actual work. "I'm afraid the paint will curdle," says a frustrated Chris Thomas, a volunteer from Iowa.

Finally, just after noon, the work begins. But still there is something wrong. The volunteers go about their earnest, workmanlike efforts, yet something is unnatural about the whole affair. The volunteers, most of them white middle-Americans, travel and work in tight anxious packs of ten or twelve. Local cops stand on every corner to keep an eye on the workers, and to prevent them from wandering too far down the side streets. The scene represents a kind of help effort that community activist Robert Woodson will describe in a panel the next day as the worst kind of volunteering, a "blitzkrieg effort," where volunteers "parachute in there and do a kind of transplant which the body then rejects."

Meanwhile, "the indigenous people," as the volunteers call them, sit, unmoved and unenlightened, on folding chairs outside their houses, bullheaded holdouts for the lines that divide us. When I ask the 28-year-old Latisha Jakson what she thinks of the effort, she first starts out by parroting the radio banter that has bombarded the city's airwaves over the last few days. "I think it's really important that people get together and do things together and I appreciate that they make the buildings nice and...." We are walking along, and suddenly she stops dead in her tracks, in front of a just-painted storefront. She throws down her cigarette. "What the fuck is this?" she yells. "Do you see this? Did you see who did this? This is the worst paint job I've ever seen." The store is her brother's pawn shop, called The Pawn Shop. And the paint job *is* pretty spotty. On the left half of the storefront, a thin coat of jaundiced, oatmeal-colored paint barely covers the graffiti; on the right, a thick dollop of misapplied paint covers part of the store's sign. "I hope they didn't pay them for this," Jakson fumes, "because I could have paid my one-legged grandmother to do it, and she'd have done a better job."

The nastiness of Nicetown is forgotten in the hoopla of that night's gala, "A Celebration of Service." Oprah presides in blazing turquoise, and introduces the speakers. First is Colin Powell. "We believe something magical and momentous will sweep the entire country," he says hopefully. After Powell, John Travolta is ushered out to present three kids with youth mentoring awards. He tells the story of his own life, how he never finished high school, but, thanks to a "unique method," he learned to fly airplanes, and he hopes others will take advantage of the "miraculous mentoring tool developed by education doctor L. Ron Hubbard."

In the press room a floor below the gala, a demi-cavalcade of stars streams in. Most have their own stories of personal triumph to share, and they all profess to be

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happy to help in their own little ways. Wynonna, the tubbiest of the Judds, has decided that what the mentoring movement needs is a "big ole country girl like me." She has offered to get her hands dirty, "get myself physically involved." What might that mean? "I think," she says conclusively, "I should put on a concert." Brooke Shields and Michael Bolton both offer to generously "turn their celebrity into a currency," as Bolton puts it, and start their own foundations. Rob Reiner reveals that "in analysis it became clear to me that what happened in the first three years of my life was crucial to how I interacted with the world." It must be true for everyone else, then, so he's decided to launch the "I Am a Child Foundation."

Monday morning, the tomorrow we've all been waiting for, the day the work is to begin. But first, more talk about work! "We warmly welcome volunteers from all walks of life in this great land," says Ford (or was that Carter?). "Youngsters are falling dead, shot by other youngsters," Powell intones awkwardly. "Go/forward/and/help/our/children," he says, slashing his stiff hand in the air. Incredibly, Philadelphia Mayor Edward G. Rendell lays out his plans for yet more talk: a follow-up summit in Philadelphia this summer, one of *thirty-six* baby summits around the country. The mayor holds up the Philadelphia Pledge, Volume 1. "And when we have the Philadelphia summit we'll have volume 2 and volume 3 and volume 4. . . ." An aide leaves a copy of volume 1 on a chair. The book is about 600 pages of large, colorful type. Each page lists a local nonprofit and, underneath, a few bulleted points about their mission. One mission that is frequently mentioned is . . . to talk. Or, as it is more elaborately expressed, to "empower community leaders through networking." Later, I attend a "breakout session" of nonprofit groups from the northeastern states. I count the number of times the word "networking" is uttered in two hours of talk: eighty-five. I go home, silent. •

LONDON DISPATCH

MAJOR CHANGES

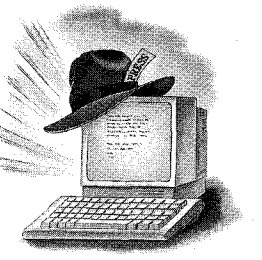
By James Wood

On my first evening in London, I went to a literary party and bumped into Salman Rushdie. Mindful of the two policemen who had arrived with him, I asked if his personal situation would change when the Labour Party won the election on May 1. "It probably won't change much," he said. "But, unlike the Conservatives, the Labour leadership is friendly to me. I know several of them, including Tony Blair; they are personal friends."

Less drastically than Rushdie, that is how Britain feels, too: nothing much will change under a new Labour government, but its members are our friends. We all *know* Tony Blair, and he likes us; his very heart is a democratic chamber.

Blair's triumph has been precisely to persuade the British that nothing will change too violently. Britain is afraid of change. Voting for Blair's Labour Party was a way of voting out John Major's unpopular Conservative Party, while simultaneously voting for popular conservatism. From the beginning, Tony Blair has understood that this was the only way to unclench a Conservative grip that has lasted unbroken since Margaret Thatcher's victory in 1979.

So Blair has traveled around the country, whipping up apathy: his election campaign aimed at the management of boredom. There has been a lot of grumbling here about the "Americanization" of politics, and the "Clintonization" of Blair. Certainly, Blair's team borrowed a lot of American tricks. They had a theme tune ("Things Can Only Get Better," by the improbably named D:Ream) and a fleet of helicopters. They borrowed Stephen Frears, the director of *Dangerous Liaisons* and *My Beautiful Laundrette*, for a five-minute campaign movie for television. Ten years ago, Labour leaders looked like escaped sociologists and muttered about *Grundrisse*. Tony Blair's minders patted and pomaded his every inch; he has never been seen looking anything but "presidential" (dark suit, white shirt, patterned tie). Early in the campaign it was decided that Blair's camel smile and hectic dentition detracted from his "gravity"; after that, the only available poster showed a frowningly earnest candidate, his mouth screwed shut as if in pain.



Blair's press agent, a former journalist named Alistair Campbell, controlled every molecule of the chemistry between the party slate and the voters. Labour politicians were not allowed to walk into a television studio without the appointed "LTT" (Line-To-Take). A rosary of mantras was rubbed again and again: "a society for the many not the few" was one of the newly soft formulations of the old socialist argument about "the fairer distribution of wealth."

Blair turned himself into a mockingbird, without the sarcasm. From Thatcher and Major, he lifted a belief in tight fiscal policy and low public spending. From Newt Gingrich, he took the idea of a contract with the British people. From Clinton, he learned how to promise either cloudy luxuries—every schoolchild should have an email address to "improve the communication process"—or so much to so many people that the promise itself became cloudy. If the Scots want their own parliament, then they should have one; but it will not be a real parliament, he said. He's in favor of the Tories' privatization of formerly public industries, such as the train service, but his government will heavily tax these same companies for being too successful. So, the smart talk goes, Blair is Clinton, always on the make, always with something to appease everybody.

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But Blair is not Clinton. The well-rubbed comparison—men who shifted their parties rightward, who disciplined their critics, admiraled election campaigns that glided in shining splendor across sunlit seas and went in for shameless political cross-dressing—misrepresents the British context. There are similarities, of course. But it was not very painful for Clinton to become Clinton. It was extremely painful for Blair to become Clinton. Blair has traveled a greater distance than Clinton; the speed and ferocity with which he made the journey excite both wariness and a kind of disgusted admiration. The Labour Party has never resembled the Democratic Party: it was the factory of English socialism.

Before Tony Blair became leader in 1994, Labour's constitution had always included a commitment to the fair distribution of the means of ownership, exchange and production (a clause written by Beatrice and Sidney Webb in 1917). Until the early 1980s, the party believed in subsidizing nationalized industry (cars, steel, electricity), the absolute primacy of the public sector, the unilateral surrender of Britain's nuclear weapons, the right of workers to strike in sympathy with other strikers in unrelated industries and the punitive taxation of the rich. Money-making was looked upon with the greatest suspicion.

During the 1980s, it became clear that the rapid growth of the middle class was ensuring Labour's permanent irrelevance. A socialist party was unelectable. None of Labour's leaders, not even the reforming Neil Kinnock, understood this in the way that Blair does. Clinton believes in building consensus about himself among divergent constituencies; Blair believes in middle-class conservatism, even if this brings unpopularity in his own constituency. Tellingly, Clinton did not really become unpopular among his own until he came to power; Blair has been a hated figure among the left since he became party leader.

And hated for a reason; there is nothing ambivalent, nothing Clintonian, about the way Blair threw socialism out of British politics. He forced his party to excise the Webbs' clause, even when most of his colleagues advised against it. He praised Margaret Thatcher publicly. He said that he would not renationalize privatized industries. He softened the links between his party and the unions by reducing unions' voting power within the party. He seduced the financial world: one of the early images of this election campaign showed Blair in shirtsleeves and tie, surrounded by a group of prominent brokers and traders, sharing a drink.

While Blair has jettisoned one politics of class, he has skillfully manipulated another. The privately educated, Oxford-smoothed leader appeals to newspaper editors and BBC journalists—who have overwhelmingly supported him—because he seems one of them. Whereas Major, who never went to a university, promised and embodied a classless society, Blair has won over the middle class by appealing to its middle-classness. This was the sacrifice that the beast of Middle England demanded before it would vote again for Labour.

The great and growing issue of the middle class in Britain is so-called Euro-skepticism. This election marks the moment at which British enthusiasm for Euro-unionism, always tentative, died. One poll showed that as many Britons now want to leave the European Community as want to stay in it. On April 29, the London *Times* announced that it would support neither leader, but advised people to vote for avowedly Euro-skeptical candidates regardless of party affiliation. New Europhobic organizations are flowering: Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party; the UK Independence Party (slogan: "EUROSKEPTICISM IS NOT ENOUGH. ONLY GENUINE INDEPENDENCE WILL SUFFICE").

The issue is not one that either Labour or the Tories welcome. John Major's party has fissured over Europe—this is largely why Margaret Thatcher lost her job. During the campaign, 200 Euro-skeptical Conservative Members of Parliament, Euro-skeptics, broke rank with Major's referendum policy and declared themselves permanent enemies of the single currency. Labour is no more unified.

The issue looms, nevertheless. By January 1, 1999, several European countries, including Germany and France, are to have abandoned their currencies in favor of a common currency, called the Euro. European monetary convergence would have deep implications for national sovereignty and for the control of a country's money supply. A central European bank, located in Frankfurt, will have the power to fix interest rates. The expectant parents of this get-together speak raptly about the United States of Europe, a federation in which things are decided centrally, in Brussels, Strasbourg or Frankfurt. That much of this federal enthusiasm comes from Germany is not lost on the British. A senior Conservative politician said that, while on the campaign trail, he had not heard such anti-German sentiment and so many reminiscences of the war since the 1960s.

It is generally reported that Euro-unionism is the one issue to which Blair has been unequivocally committed, but that is not quite right. Unlike Major, Blair has pledged himself to signing a European social chapter, which commits Britain to certain employment practices, such as a minimum wage. But on the immediate question upon which voters have fixated, that of the single currency, Blair's policy is identical to Major's: both promise the British a referendum, and a result of any referendum would almost certainly be against abolishing the British pound.

In the last days of the campaign, Blair took care to further reassure the anxious voters, saying that he was against "a European super-state."

Although the eerie smoothness of this election campaign had much to do with the loyalty to stasis evinced by both Major and Blair, and by the electorate's desire that nothing much should change, two things have changed forever: popular mainstream socialism has died; and the European ideal has snuffed itself out in Britain. •

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Iran and Germany make nice.

BONN MOTS

By Jacob Heilbrunn

Since Germany reunited in 1990, the only sore point in German-American relations has been Bonn's cozy relationship with Tehran. That relationship, the U.S. government hopes, has been damaged by the finding of a German court on April 10 that the Iranian leadership plotted the 1992 assassination of four Kurdish exiles at Berlin's Mykonos restaurant. In the aftermath of this verdict, all of the members of the European Union, apart from Greece, recalled their ambassadors from Iran, and Germany announced that it was reassessing its approach toward Tehran. As a result, American officials and the press are trumpeting the dawn of a new era, in which formerly squishy Europeans, led by Germany, discover the virtues of the American tough line.

Don't believe a word of it. Apart from a few gestures made for public consumption, no serious changes are being contemplated by Bonn. Quite the contrary. The German government, which was surely aware that Iran had engineered the murders, believes its only failure was in not exerting enough pressure on the Berlin court to avoid the indictment of Iranian officials. Far from breaking off the official policy of "critical dialogue" with Iran, Bonn remains unwilling to countenance criticism of it. The two main architects of Germany's flirtation with Iran, Bernd Schmidbauer, who is the chief of intelligence and who is described in the German press as "Agent 008," and Klaus Kinkel, foreign minister and leader of the liberal Free Democratic Party, are adamantly opposed to isolating Tehran: Kinkel recently declared that the last thing Germany can afford is a "scorched earth" policy toward Iran.

The difference between Washington's Iran policy and Bonn's is not a clash of caprices, but a fundamental conflict of national interests. In the post-cold war era, a newly assertive Germany is pushing a foreign policy approach toward Iran at odds with the American policy of "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran. Germany's neo-Bismarckian approach is rooted in self-interested commerce, largely unencumbered by even the faint attention to moralism that interferes with America's trade-dominated policy. In 1991, as Yugoslavia dismembered itself, Germany insisted on early recognition of its Second World War ally Croatia. In 1995, Chancellor Helmut Kohl was the first Western leader to visit a Chinese military garrison since Tiananmen Square. Today, he and Foreign Minister Kinkel are following the same course toward Iran. To maintain the fiction that Germany is not unilaterally elevating commerce above human rights, Kohl is using the European Union to provide cover. Indeed, in Luxembourg on April 29, at a special European Union meeting of foreign ministers, Germany pushed through a decision to return ambassadors to Iran.

Although the United States remains traumatized by the seizure in 1979 of the American Embassy in Tehran, Germany is unruffled by the Iranian mullahs. It views Iran not as a rogue state but as a legitimate nation, difficult at times, perhaps, but really no more dangerous than, say, Syria. This view is rooted in historical links between Iran and Germany that date back over a century. Before World War I, Iran hoped to use Germany as a counterweight against the British and the Russians. During the 1920s and 1930s, scores of Iranians studied at German universities, and the Nazis supplied Shah Reza Khan with airplanes and ammunition, only to watch the British and the Russians invade Iran in 1941. In the postwar era, West Germany became one of the shah's closest allies; the 1968 student revolution that upended German society began as a protest against those ties during a visit by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to Berlin. Since the 1979 revolution that toppled the shah and begat the current regime in Iran, German firms have supplied Tehran with technology; now Germany is Iran's leading trading partner.

Some 170 German firms, including industrial giants like Siemens, Krupp and Daimler-Benz, are currently operating in Iran. These firms have no inclination to close shop, Mykonos verdict or not. The business community's verdict on the court's verdict: keep "political matters," as the German Congress of Industry and Commerce put it, out of business. It is true that German trade with Iran has been declining: in 1996, it fell to just over 2 billion deutsche marks annually, down from a high of 7.9 billion in 1992. But lately, Iran has begun to invest in former East German automobile plants and steel mills. More importantly, the German government and German banks have also underwritten billions in loans to Iran. The Westdeutsche Landesbank, for instance, recently syndicated a $160 million loan to the

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Iranian Offshore Engineering & Construction Company to develop the Soroush oil field in the Persian Gulf, a project being spearheaded by President Hashemi Rafsanjani's son, Mehdi. These debts have become a lever for Tehran. With Kohl intent on establishing European monetary union, Germany needs every deutsche mark it can get to keep its budget deficit from exceeding the Maastricht limits. German officials are quick to note that Iran has, in fact, been reliably repaying its debts.

To justify its economic dealings, Kohl and Kinkel convinced the European Union, in December 1992, to adopt a policy of "critical dialogue" toward Iran. Bonn's line ever since has been that cossetting Iran is a European policy, not a German one. But, despite British misgivings, Germany in particular, not Europe in general, has espoused using commerce to soften up Tehran. While France has long been more interested in Lebanon, Germany has made Iran its special friend.

The advances that Germany has made toward Iran have not been confined to the economic sphere. The German and Iranian intelligence services have cooperated with one another closely. In October 1993, as the Mykonos trial was just getting under way, the German intelligence chief Schmidbauer hosted the Iranian cleric and chief of intelligence, Ali Fallahian, for a two-day visit; Schmidbauer escorted Fallahian on a tour of the Bonn federal chancellery and intelligence headquarters at Wiesbaden. Though German prosecutors wanted to arrest Fallahian, Kinkel and Schmidbauer balked, and Fallahian held a news conference in the Iranian Embassy in Bonn to brag about the "technical help" provided by Germany to Iran—help that included electronic spy equipment. In November 1995, Kinkel invited Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati to a high-level conference in Germany on human rights and the Islamic world; he only rescinded the invitation after the German parliament denounced it in the wake of Iran's hailing of the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. According to the August 1, 1996, *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Germany has even winked at Iran's use of its Bonn embassy as its nerve center for terrorist operations; thirty of the ninety employees at the embassy work on a heavily fortified third floor, tracking Iranian dissidents across Europe.

Bonn, of course, argues that the policy of critical dialogue (or, if you prefer the Clintonian locution, constructive engagement) gives Germany an opportunity to persuade Iran to act in a more civilized fashion. But the advantages that Bonn has garnered from its special relationship with Iranian intelligence are underwhelming. In July 1996, Schmidbauer procured the release from Lebanon of several German hostages and the corpses of two Israeli sergeants held by Hezbollah. Schmidbauer has also hinted at Iranian help in locating the Israeli Air Force navigator Ron Arad, who was lost over Lebanon. So far, that's about it for the fruits of dialoguing.

Still, Germany claims that its policy has brought rewards even beyond the economic and intelligence spheres. Klaus-Peter Klaiber, the head of policy planning in the foreign office, declared at an April 21 Washington, D.C., conference sponsored by the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies that "critical dialogue" has prodded Iran to adopt the nonproliferation treaty, collaborate with the International Atomic Energy Association and release hostages in Lebanon. "There is no indication," Klaiber said, "that a policy of containment and isolation pushed by our American friends would have achieved much more." Asked if he could see *any* circumstances in which Germany or its European allies might adopt economic sanctions, Klaiber responded, "No. Sanctions will never have the intended effect."

One reason Germany is unwilling to reconsider its Iran policy may be that the United States has not seriously pressured Bonn to change it. In a talk on April 18 to the Arthur F. Burns association, Kinkel pointed out the inconsistency of American ties with China and boasted that, when Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Bonn, she "didn't tell us to cut off ties." Nor has the State Department made Germany's ties with Iran a priority: the highest official responsible for monitoring Germany and Iran is Robert Deutsch, a director of northern Gulf affairs in the bureau of near eastern affairs. The emissary sent in mid-April to coax the Europeans into taking a tougher stand on Iran was Peter Tarnoff, a former undersecretary of state who now holds no official post and even less influence with Albright. And Israel, also in a position to pressure Bonn, appears to be playing a double-sided game. Although Israel, which the Germans say is receiving secret oil shipments from Iran, complains publicly about German machinations, it reportedly has private complaints about Bonn's pursuit of realpolitik.

Neither the morally dubious German policy of détente nor the American policy of containment appears to have had the slightest effect on the Iranian regime itself. Like "critical dialogue," the Clinton administration's "dual containment" of Iraq and Iran has led nowhere. As S. Frederick Starr observes in the spring 1997 issue of *The National Interest*, containment of Iran has, in fact, been counterproductive. Traditionally enemies, Russia and Iran recently signed a ten-year Treaty of Peace and Friendship, and Iran has begun to make substantial inroads into oil-rich Central Asia. So far, the only country that the United States has isolated is itself.

The United States and Germany are unlikely to abandon their contradictory policies. A coordinated strategy that dispensed with the illusions of transforming the Tehran regime overnight, but offered incentives and punishments for Iranian behavior, might modify its worst excesses. The more likely outcome will be an emotionally satisfying one for both sides: Germany's love-fest with Iran will permit Washington to continue to scold European amorality, while Bonn tut-tuts the United States for its lack of realism. •

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THE NUMBERS GAME

By Robyn Gearey

During the blustery first week of March, New York was talking of nothing but riches. No matter that the stock market was slipping from its dizzying perch, New Yorkers were spending fortunes in their heads. "I would buy a big house and get lots of maids so I never have to clean again," one young woman told a local reporter. "If I win, I want to take my family to see Howard Stern's movie this weekend," William Boutilette told the *New York Post.* Boutilette had come from New Jersey for a shot at the jackpot. The hopeful stood in endless lines, swarmed through newsstands at the rate of over 8,000 a day, all for the chance at $45 million, the New York State Lottery's third-largest jackpot ever.

It seems so harmlessly all-American: the wide-eyed excitement, the giddy anticipation, the hope of winning it all. To most people, the state lottery is the great equalizer, the one time everyone has a fair shot at making it. Even those who know that the nation's thirty-eight state lotteries (including the District of Columbia) offer a very poor, very distant shot at winning anything of value generally regard the games as no great evil. After all, some lucky souls do strike it rich, and the enterprise as a whole is to the good, since lottery profits go toward social betterment—toward school systems and wildlife refuges, and so on.

In fact, state lotteries are the very antithesis of the American Dream. They are mechanisms by which the state seduces its citizens with the promise of riches, suckering them into gambling away their income and their unemployment checks on games that offer an almost infinitesimal chance of winning big. You are more likely to be struck by lightning, or to find a pearl in an oyster, than you are to win a multimillion-dollar jackpot. As for the argument that the means by which the lotteries raise money should be forgiven because of all the good that lotteries do, forget that too. State lotteries may be a method for converting individual contributions into works of collective good, but they are about as inefficient a way as could be designed. On average, only 34 cents of every dollar spent on a state lottery actually makes its way into a state treasury.

No one is really in the lottery business to help the elderly, improve the schools or save endangered species; those are just the sugar that make state-sponsored gambling easier to swallow. The truth about lotteries is simple: like taxes, they exist to raise general revenues for state governments (even when lottery proceeds go to a specific sector of government, they still count as general revenue, because lottery income targeted for, say, education represents money that the state does not have to come up with from the tax-supported general fund). The thirty-eight state lotteries have been enormously successful at raising money: last year, they raked in over $35 billion. Overwhelmingly, lotteries draw their players from the poorer and less-educated members of society, those least able to afford to contribute to the state's coffers. The states could raise this money openly through taxes, but taxes make voters angry. Lottery players, on the other hand, don't get angry, because they choose to purchase tickets. They choose this because they believe the states' lies that playing the lottery might really lift them from poverty or drudgery. They believe these lies because the states work very hard to make players believe them.

Lottery commissions are public entities and, as such, are not subject to the Federal Trade Commission regulations that mandate truth in advertising. Nor are they monitored by the Better Business Bureau. Lotteries are regulated only by the state governments themselves—the same state governments that depend on lottery profits to make up anywhere from 2 to 10 percent of their revenues. The result is that, in their quest for profits, more than a few state lotteries forgo their regulatory role, acting more like for-profit corporations than government agencies. State lotteries do whatever it takes—sophisticated advertising, specialized marketing techniques, clever slogans—to sell their product. They do this even when it means misleading players about their odds of winning, introducing more addictive games that aggressively target the poor and looking away while minors gamble. In their hucksterism, the states have been aided and abetted by the federal government, which, in a 1975 fit of devolution, gave the states complete autonomy over the lotteries.

The thirty-eight U.S. lotteries spend nearly half a billion dollars a year on advertising, placing them among the biggest advertisers in the country. They are also among the most disingenuous. Take a current Wash-

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ington, D.C., lottery ad campaign for D.C. Daily Millions. The slogan is "A MILLION A DAY—JUST PLAY." D.C. Daily Millions would be more accurately titled D.C. Daily Thousands: no one has won more than $5,000 in the history of the game. The most common manipulation of facts in the lotteries' advertisements concerns the odds of winning the games. About a half-dozen states, Virginia, Ohio and Wisconsin among them, do cite realistic odds in their ads. But the vast majority advertise only the top prize, which can be as high as $45 million in states like New York and California, and then give the odds of winning the *lowest prize* in the game, usually a free ticket. The odds for these small prizes can be as good as one in four, but they have nothing to do with a player's chances of winning the big prize; for instance, the odds that one of the hopeful in New York would walk away with the $45 million top award were one in 12.9 million. If the states really wanted to give their gamblers a fair shake, they would run advertisements urging them to bet on horses, or to take their business to the nearest casino: the favorite in a thoroughbred race generally offers odds of one in three, the odds on hitting a winning combination in casino slots are one in twenty and a roulette player stands one chance in thirty-five of guessing right.

Instead, the states run ads like this one run by the Connecticut lottery a few years ago: "When I was younger I suppose I could have done more to plan my future. But I didn't," said the smiling average Joe on the screen. "I guess I could have put some money aside. But I didn't. Or I could have made some smart investments. But I didn't. Heck, I could have bought a one-dollar Connecticut Lotto ticket, won a jackpot worth millions, and gotten a nice big check every year for twenty years. And I did! I won!" A voice-over intoned, "Overall chance of winning is one in thirty."

Ads like that one, which imply that playing the lottery is a smarter bet than saving and investing, are typical, as are ads depicting posh mansions, lavish resorts and flashy sports cars. Some ads are aimed specifically at those most likely to gamble on the lotteries—the poor. One infamous Illinois ad, placed on a billboard in one of Chicago's poorest neighborhoods in the 1980s, read "THIS COULD BE YOUR WAY OUT." Lotteries also prey on the poor by timing ads to coincide with monthly welfare and Social Security checks. In their book *Selling Hope*, Charles T. Clotfelter and Philip J. Cook report that an advertising plan for Ohio's SuperLotto read: "Schedule heavier media weight during those times of the month where consumer disposable income peaks.... Government benefits, payroll and Social Security payments are released on the first Tuesday of each calendar month."

The dynamic of any vice is constant destruction and renewal: as addicts burn out, new addicts must be recruited. Advertising is not enough. In addition to ads, lotteries have also enlisted sophisticated marketing tools to promote their games. As the beer and tobacco companies use televised sporting events to market their goods as celebrations of American individualism, the lotteries have designed and produced television shows to market gambling as wholesome American fun. Massachusetts, California, Illinois and Florida have all developed weekly lottery-based game shows. Just like "Wheel of Fortune" or "The Joker's Wild," the lottery shows revolve around a theme, only that theme is a promotion, a tie-in to an actual lottery game. A show might be based on, say, bingo, or modeled after a $1,000-a-week-for-life game—it is, in essence, a lottery ad. Jonathan Goodson, who produces the shows, told one industry publication that "people who watch the shows are much more likely to play, and play more often." The shows portray the lottery as good family fun; says Goodson, "game shows are mom and apple pie."

Another dynamic of any vice is progression: the jaded addict requires stronger wine, faster cars. To keep players' interest and to attract new ones, lotteries have developed a barrage of different games, and these games are meant to be more stimulating—more addictive—than the basic lotteries. In addition to several forms of the traditional numbers games (Lotto, Pick Three, Pick Six, etc.), all thirty-eight lotteries now sell instant scratch-off tickets, thirty-three have instant bingo games, eight run Fast Keno (a casino-like video game, with drawings every five minutes) and five run video slot machines (VLTs). In an effort to entice customers with bigger and bigger jackpots, twenty states participate in Powerball, a weekly game that had a jackpot of $26 million during the last week of April, and six have joined in The Big Game, which has had top prizes as high as $77 million.

The most controversial of these new games are Keno and the VLTs. Both are highly addictive, and critics argue that they are too close to casino gambling, but, as far as state lotteries are concerned, the closer to the casino style, the better. A current television ad for the Virginia Lottery features a stereotypical casino lounge singer, replete with unbuttoned shirt, hairy chest and gold medallion, crooning the praises of the lottery's new game, Casino Nights. "There are five great casino games on one ticket," he warbles. "So you can have all the fun of a casino, as you will see. Without having to listen to terrible lounge singers like me."

As the lotteries erase whatever distinction there was between their form of "clean" gambling and the sort that takes place in seedier locales, they have even physically become a part of vice's demi-world. Keno terminals are most often placed in bars and restaurants, where their potential players will be a captive audience through a few dozen drawings, and where they will, like casino players plied with house drinks, be less inhibited about throwing away their money. VLTs have become popular at racetracks, spawning the term "racino." Says Bernie Horn of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling, "No one thought they were legalizing slot machines when they voted for the Delaware Lottery, but now any game owned by the state lottery is legal."

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Are the states as effective at regulating the lottery as they are at selling it? A handful of states have taken steps to make their lotteries more responsible by restricting the types of advertising they can do, and requiring more accurate information on odds. Massachusetts took the most drastic step and cut its lottery's advertising budget from several million to $400,000. But most reform attempts have met with extreme resistance. On the national level, Louisiana Congressman Jim McCrery introduced a bill in January 1995 to subject lotteries to Federal Trade Commission standards. The measure went nowhere. McCrery plans to reintroduce it during this session, but he doubts he will have much luck attracting cosponsors, and he doesn't have high expectations that the bill will succeed. State legislators haven't done much better. Nebraska State Senator Jim Jensen's bill to prohibit the lottery from "inducing or enticing persons to participate in lottery games" was killed just days after Jensen gave testimony on it; and, in Iowa, House Majority Leader Brent Siegrist's bill to prohibit all television and radio lottery ads never even made it out of committee.

At a recent industry convention that included officials from every state lottery, it was clear that reform wasn't really on the top of the agenda. The convention included a segment called "Advertising Bans: What Price Is Paid?" During a panel discussion, Virginia Lottery Director Penelope W. Kyle complained that her state's ad restrictions "tie you down," forcing the lottery to disclose those "horrible odds." That remark earned sympathetic chuckles from the audience, and one lottery official in the crowd whispered to the man next to her, "Thank God we don't have to deal with that."

Even when states do take drastic steps to rein in the lottery, they don't necessarily get the results they intended. Having its ad budget slashed didn't stop the Massachusetts Lottery from deploying other, arguably worse, weapons in its arsenal. *The Boston Globe* reported in February that the lottery has saturated the poorer areas of the state with agents. For example, there is one lottery agent per 363 residents in Chelsea, a low-income suburb of Boston, compared with one agent per 3,063 residents in affluent Wellesley. This strategy works: the per capita annual lottery expenditure in Chelsea is $915; in Lincoln (a wealthy suburb similar to Wellesley), the per capita expenditure is just $30. And only a day after a Massachusetts Lottery official told me primly that they "don't do any advertising whatsoever," the *Globe* ran a front-page story reporting that the governor and the Internal Revenue Service had called for an investigation into the lottery's use of free-play coupons to find out whether the coupons "constitute an end run around [the] legislated cap on advertising spending." Instead of hard-sell television ads, it turns out, the lottery flooded its residents with $80 million a year in free-play coupons via direct mail, then paid the bills with free-play coupons instead of cash, so it could claim to be keeping within its ad budget.

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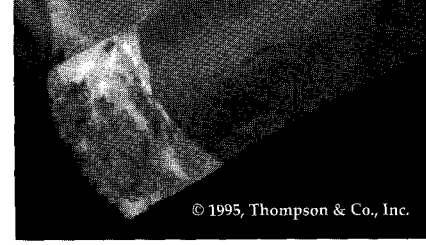

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In California, the state Supreme Court ruled last summer that Keno was illegal. But no matter. The state now runs Hot Spot, a video-based game strikingly similar to Keno. Denise Kimes, California's marketing director, even gave a presentation at the lottery convention in March, titled: "Fast Draw Keno: Why Is It So Hot?"

But the most egregious example of lotteries ducking their responsibilities has been in selling tickets to minors. It is illegal in every state for anyone under 18 to gamble, but a recent survey of 15- to 18-year-olds in Minnesota showed that 27 percent have purchased lottery tickets themselves and 8 percent had another underage friend buy tickets for them. This is neither a new nor an isolated problem. In 1984, then-Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt gave a speech saying that any prohibition on lottery sales to minors was unenforceable and that playing the lottery was "part of the culture" at his children's school. A study, cited in *Selling Hope*, of New Jersey high-schoolers in the late '80s showed that 45 percent had gambled on the lottery; 13 percent said they played weekly. The recent proliferation of instant ticket vending machines has made it nearly impossible for state lotteries to monitor who is buying the tickets, but the convenience of the machines means more people play, so the machines stay. And lottery retailers themselves pose a problem. The New York Lottery, which cleaned up its act last year under orders from Governor George Pataki, has been running a sting operation for the past eight months in an effort to crack down on lottery agents who sell to minors. Insiders say many retailers, particularly in New York City, don't pass the test.

The lotteries' hard-sell, misleading approach is particularly galling because it isn't necessary. Lotteries that have experimented with low-key, "soft-sell" ads and stricter compliance standards have been surprised at the reaction. Over the past year, the New York Lottery has found that its recent attitude adjustment did not mean losing revenue. The lottery has pulled all advertising for its Quick Draw (Keno) game, because, as lottery spokesman Richard Grenell put it, "the state's responsibility is to regulate the game; we have no responsibility to advertise and suggest that people play." Before Pataki's involvement, ad campaigns were full of slogans like "ALL YOU NEED IS A DOLLAR AND A DREAM," and "WE WON'T STOP UNTIL EVERYONE'S A MILLIONAIRE." The new slogan, which refers to the lottery's contribution to education, is "THE NEW YORK LOTTERY MAKES US ALL A LITTLE RICHER." The lottery backs this up with promotions like "Wired for Education," which recently connected 3,000 schools and libraries in the state to the Internet. New York's lottery still advertises as aggressively as ever, but the ads now are much more realistic. Instead of promising endless riches, they highlight the fact that profits go to help the schools. And sales just keep going up.

Today's lotteries have evolved into the opposite of what they were intended to be. In the early days of the country, lotteries were even more commonplace than they are today. They were sponsored by the states and held as needed, financing such projects as reconstructing Faneuil Hall in Boston and buildings on the campuses of Harvard and Yale. They gathered funds for a specific, limited purpose, and they offered modest rewards to the winner. These public works lotteries had far more in common with church and school charity raffles than with today's state lotteries. They remained popular fund-raisers through the early 1800s. But then lotteries began to be privatized; individual dealers, instead of the state, began selling tickets. Eventually these dealers took over the management of the lotteries themselves. The resulting fraud and corruption forced every state to outlaw them in the latter half of the century.

In the absence of legal lotteries, illegal numbers games emerged; they, too, became increasingly popular, bringing with them organized crime. Hoping to divert money away from these games, New Hampshire and New York reinstituted state lotteries in the 1960s. By 1975, eleven states had followed their lead. The lottery proponents' arguments were almost always the same: Wouldn't you rather the state profit from gambling than the mob? Wouldn't you rather have a lottery than higher taxes? The reasoning was logical, and the new lotteries might have gone along serving their purpose unobtrusively and relatively cleanly, if not for two equally significant developments. First, in 1975, the federal government lifted its ban on lottery ads—which prevented the lotteries from advertising on radio and television—and opened the door for the kind of manipulation discussed above. Second, having failed to learn their lesson from the early lotteries, the new ones began turning over the operation of their games to private companies. The introduction of private, for-profit companies has led, again, to widespread charges of corruption involving state officials and legislators.

At first, there were a dozen or so private companies competing to run the lotteries, but in the past two decades, that number has dwindled to two: GTECH and Automated Wagering International, Inc. (AWI). GTECH is, by an enormous margin, the most successful, with contracts for twenty-nine of the thirty-eight lotteries and 1996 revenues of $744 million. GTECH's success comes in part because it is good at what it does, but also because the company has always been willing to go to great lengths to beat the competition.

In the past few years, GTECH officials or the company's associates have come under grand jury investigation in four states. No charges have ever been made against the company itself, but one of the investigations resulted in the conviction of a former GTECH vice president, J. David Smith, for fraud and money-laundering in connection with various kickback schemes in New Jersey. Another investigation led to the conviction of a GTECH lobbyist for racketeering (he was charged with bribing a state senator) in California while working for other clients. He was acquitted of the specific charge relating to GTECH. These are not the only incidents where GTECH has had problems. In a *Fortune* article last November, reporter Peter Elkind showed that

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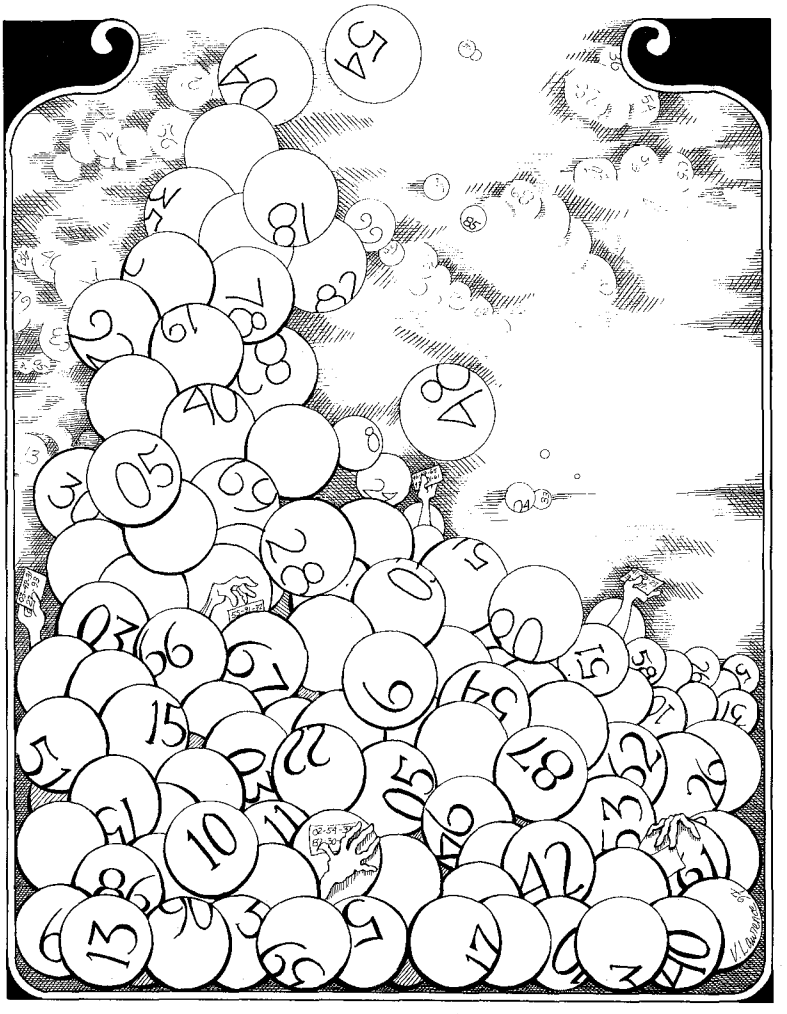
these cases are only the most extreme examples of the company's aggressive business strategies. Among the tactics Elkind chronicled: the traditional wine 'em and dine 'em (former AWI President W. Hubert Plummer told Elkind, "We'd go to dinner with the lottery director and find out that GTECH had hired a yacht and taken out the whole damn legislature"); and hard-ball intimidation tactics: during a dispute with GTECH, then-Director of the Arizona Lottery Bruce Mayberry twice received packages of rotten mutton from Smith, who claims he didn't know the meat was spoiled.

Consider Texas, the site of GTECH's most recent public relations nightmare. At the center of a complicated web of accusations is, again, J. David Smith. The scandal began when Entrecorp, a lobbying firm co-owned by former Texas Lieutenant Governor Ben Barnes, was hired in 1989 to lobby for GTECH in Texas. Entrecorp's contract gave the firm a commission of 4 percent of GTECH's Texas revenues, amounting to about $3 million a year. Entrecorp employed J. David Smith as a consultant, and federal prosecutors allege the company paid him a third of its earnings from the GTECH account. *The Houston Chronicle* reported that a former Kentucky lottery official told investigators in that state that Smith bragged that he had paid off eight or ten Texas legislators, with up to $10,000 each, to give "favorable consideration" to the lottery bill when it had come before the state legislature in 1990. Smith has denied the *Chronicle*'s report.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

In Smith's New Jersey trial last fall, it also came out that, in 1992, Smith had hired the boyfriend of Texas Lottery Director Nora Linares as a consultant in New Mexico, a scandal that resulted in Linares's firing this past January, even though both she and GTECH claim that they knew nothing about it. (Linares has since been exonerated by the lottery board and is now suing GTECH. Among her charges: GTECH "hired anyone and everyone who might be able to influence the award of the [original] contract"; and Smith secretly hired Linares's boyfriend "in an effort to have some potential, future leverage over [her].") Combined with the revelations about Barnes, the Linares scandal resulted in the Texas Lottery Commission's decision to rebid GTECH's contract, which would not have expired until 2002.

GTECH responded with a letter-writing campaign, flooding state legislators with missives from lottery vendors raving about GTECH. But it turns out that many of the agents whose signatures were on the letters knew nothing about them. GTECH says it called lottery retailers and asked for permission to use their signatures. The retailers say GTECH callers must have asked whoever answered the phone for permission, regardless of whether that person had the authority to give it.

"They've just become so powerful they think nobody will stand against them," says Weston Ware, an anti-gambling lobbyist in Texas. And woe to those who try. GTECH is infamous among reporters who have covered the industry for its aggressive intimidation tactics. Letters or phone calls to reporters and editors threatening lawsuits are common (mine, which was both faxed and FedExed to TNR, said, "I am putting you on notice that I am concerned that you have originally contacted this office under the false pretense of doing a story on the lottery industry.... I am referring this matter to the Company's counsel ..."). Reporters at *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, which has done two major stories on the company, say that a GTECH attorney tried to prevent a story from running in March by threatening to sue, and insisted, unsuccessfully, that the paper print a retraction of a 1994 story.

But more worrisome is the charge that GTECH also tries to intimidate lottery officials. In October, California Lottery Director Maryanne Gilliard told *The Los Angeles Times* that, in at least two separate meetings, she felt that GTECH officials were trying to intimidate her. In the first meeting, after Gilliard told GTECH officials that the lottery was not going to extend the company's contract, the officials presented her with a very critical

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report that they had prepared on the lottery, and which they threatened to release. "I think it was very interesting that one event followed the other in such a close proximity of time," Gilliard said. "This is a document that has a date on it of June, and we didn't receive it until September 10." Gilliard also reports that she received calls from other lottery directors saying that they had similar experiences, but "they don't want to go on the record.... They're just flat afraid."

Understandably, many states are getting nervous. Law enforcement officials from eight states, all but one with GTECH contracts, met in early April to "compare notes on investigations involving GTECH Corp.," reported *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution.* But GTECH's near monopolization of the lottery market means that, even in the light of these ethical concerns, states sometimes have no choice but to hire them. GTECH was the only bidder when the Louisiana contract expired last year; tiny AWI didn't bid because it was concerned that, if it won the contract, it wouldn't be able to handle the Louisiana system in addition to its existing seven clients. Charles Brooke, AWI's spokesman, says the company plans to bid on the Texas contract, but in that state GTECH has so specialized its operations that it will be extremely expensive for AWI to take over, while GTECH, with systems already in place, will likely be able to offer a more competitive bid. Desperate to escape GTECH's looming dominance, lottery officials in Kentucky are considering whether it wouldn't be better to run the lottery themselves, as Virginia does. Of course, GTECH advises against that, saying that "there are things government does well and things the private sector does well."

And the private sector of the lottery world has done very well—the top three lottery companies (GTECH, AWI and Scientific Games) earn over $1 billion a year. They spend it well, too. Scientific Games, the world's largest supplier of instant scratch-off tickets, spent over $325,000 in 1987 to pass lottery referenda in Florida and Virginia. GTECH won't divulge how much it has spent on political donations in recent years, other than to say that it no longer makes corporate donations to individual candidates. But in 1986, the same year that GTECH won the contract for the California Lottery, the company was the sixth-largest contributor to state campaigns, giving more than $300,000.

At the federal level, FEC records reveal that, between January 1993 and October 1995, the company made $114,774 in political donations. During the '96 election cycle, GTECH forked over $132,500 in soft money.

But, as we saw in Texas, the real money is spent on lobbyists, expenditures that are nearly impossible to track. In Maryland last year, the bidding war for the lottery contract cost GTECH and AWI over $100,000 in lobbying fees. And in Texas, even after the Ben Barnes revelations, GTECH, which according to testimony in the New Jersey trial spent a total of $11 million on lobbyists in 1993, is spending over a quarter of a million dollars to protect its contract worth approximately $130 million.

Even industry insiders are disgusted. In *La Fleur's Lottery World,* co-publishers Teresa and Bruce La Fleur write: "There is too much money being spent to influence past and present government officials for lottery contracts. The millions of dollars doled out to lobbyists to win contracts is simply scandalous. It has a corrosive effect. It isn't that it's illegal. It just should be.... With slush funds, bags of dirty tricks and allegations of bribes, the lottery industry is not far behind a break-in at the Watergate."

Confronted with evidence that state lotteries rook the poor, mislead the public and encourage corruption, officials fall back on the argument that these concerns pale next to the social good that arises from lottery profit. On what side does the cost-benefit needle really fall? Consider the dollar you spend on a typical lottery ticket: a little over 50 cents goes to prize payouts, around 12 cents pays operating expenses—4 cents or so of that goes to GTECH or AWI, 2 or 3 cents goes to advertising. Only about 34 cents goes back to the state as profit. State lotteries are a terribly inefficient way to raise money—the average charity, by contrast, keeps 79 cents of every dollar it raises. Of the 34 cents that does go to the state, it is often hard to say what actually becomes of the money. Out of the thirty-eight states with lotteries, only ten earmark all of their profits for education; in twelve states, lottery earnings just disappear into the general fund; the rest put profits into various other programs ranging from parks and wildlife to tourism and property tax relief. In at least two states that have earmarked lottery money for education, Florida and California, spending on education as a percentage of general revenue fell in the years immediately following the introduction of the games. The reason: in many states, legislators estimate lottery profit for the coming year and then reduce the existing education budget by that amount, so education funds don't actually increase. In fact, some educators complain that they have trouble mustering public support for education bonds because of the widespread perception that schools are rolling in lottery money. On average, states without lotteries spend 10 percent more of their budgets on education than states with lotteries.

But how else to raise revenue for cash-hungry states? There is another way. It's called taxation. There is still another way: curb spending. Legislators can take their pick, but they won't. The lottery remains entrenched because politicians are afraid of annoying the citizenry by doing either. And the joke is on the citizens.

"The Lottery, with its weekly pay-out of enormous prizes, was the one public event to which [they] paid serious attention.... It was their delight, their folly, their anodyne, their intellectual stimulant." A grandiloquent version of our opening New York scene? No, a passage from George Orwell's *1984.* Got a buck? Just hand it over to Big Brother. •

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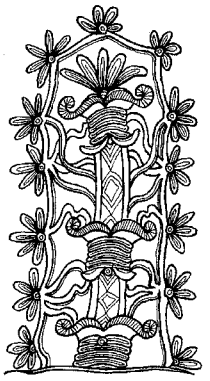
THE HARD QUESTIONS

Pride and prejudice

The impulse to use school curricula to give black youngsters a strong, positive sense of racial identity has gotten a bad rap. While guarding against the errors and excesses of some of its proponents, we should remember that Afrocentrism is a movement with deep roots in American history, for powerful and valid reasons. It arises from the existential condition of blacks in this nation of immigrants. And, for this reason, it should be, whenever possible, accommodated rather than denounced.

The intellectual historian Wilson Moses draws an interesting parallel between calls for an Afrocentric curriculum for inner-city black youngsters and demands by Christian fundamentalists for the teaching of "creation science." Both, he notes, are "evangelical utopian movements that couch their belief systems in pseudo-scientific terms, and they represent the frustration of their adherents as they attempt to cope with the stresses and anxieties of modern urban life." There is, about both movements, an aura of defensiveness and tragic folly—and yet, ultimately, a certain dignity. After all, both camps begin with a deep and abiding concern for the education of their children, and they both harbor justified suspicions of "secular" authority. Yes, there are racists among the black nationalists who trumpet a glorious African past, just as there are religious bigots among the fundamentalists. And, yes, many of their substantive claims (like the charge that the ancient Greeks stole their best ideas from black Egyptians) are just plain silly. But the Afrocentric impulse is neither rooted in nor necessarily fostering of racial antipathy. And, unlike "creation science," one can imagine an Afrocentric curriculum grounded in sound social research that nevertheless instills in black students both valid historical knowledge and a sense of racial pride. Certainly giving priority to the history of the underground railroad over that of the transcontinental railroad should not threaten a student's education.

Moreover, the existential condition confronting many blacks today, out of which the Afrocentric impulse arises, is not of their own making. It reflects the fundamental role of race in the construction of chattel slavery, and the caste system which survived well into the present century. Given this history, and the extent of segregation by race in residences and schools that continues to exist today, it makes little sense to tell blacks in the Oakland ghetto that they should drop their racial fixation and get on with the job of integration. Afrocentrism is but an artifact of the West's long-standing romance with the idea of race. Nor are blacks the only ones to share this romantic, identity-preserving impulse. The philosopher Leo Strauss, in a famous 1963 lecture to the Hillel Foundation of the University of Chicago titled "Why We Remain Jews," argued that any other course would be dishonorable. It seems odd that many defend Strauss's impulse while repudiating blacks for believing essentially the same thing.



The Afrocentric impulse is especially understandable in the teaching of history. The descendants of slaves face a profound problem of authenticity in historical matters. Their ancestors were stripped of language and custom. They wrote few memoirs. As a result, we know little about how Americans of African origin saw their world prior to the 1830s, two decades after the importation of bondsmen into the United States had largely ceased. The Negroes of the early nineteenth century were forced to construct a moral universe virtually out of nothing. And they labored under the openly stated question of whether they were genetically *capable* of meeting the responsibilities of citizenship in a modern, civilized nation. In our time, with its own speculations about the genetic basis of black intellectual inferiority, this question still reverberates. Thus, it is wholly legitimate for inner-city educators to endeavor to project positive racial images to their students.

Of course, these hardships do not justify the propagation of false information in the interest of building "self-esteem." But there is a difference between the technical project of historiography and the normative project of constructing historical narratives. Unavoidable choices of emphasis and interpretation must be made, and these choices might as well be informed by the particular psycho-social needs of one's children. This should not be a controversial observation.

It will be objected, however, that the Afrocentric impulse leads to the politicizing of history. I agree. But teaching the young is necessarily and inevitably political. It entails the authoritative promulgation of values as well as information. It is paternalistic. When we educate, we cannot escape the necessity of making judgments about the kind of citizens we want our children to become. Having immigrant children earlier in this century pledge allegiance to the American flag at the start of each school day was, most assuredly, a political move.

Critics of Afrocentrism question the legitimacy of efforts to convey to inner-city youngsters positive messages about "their history," as if any such effort must involve a loss of "objectivity." This is nonsense. While I doubt the wisdom of encouraging ghetto-dwelling youngsters to identify with a mythic African ancestral homeland, the question of whether or not to do so is not simply a technical one. It involves matters of identity and meaning on which reasonable people may disagree, and about which blacks isolated in the backwaters of American society must have their say. We are talking about educating youngsters for roles within a social and political order that has a history in which race figures in paradoxical and morally profound ways. It cannot be that, merely by defending "the honor of the race," black educators have somehow engaged, *ipso facto*, in a breach of scholarly standards.

Those acting on the Afrocentric impulse have made mistakes. In my view, they can be faulted not only for erroneous interpretations of the evidence, but for choosing vague, ancient and largely mythic history over history that is more recent and more relevant. The century after the end of slavery saw Negroes educating their children, acquiring land, founding communal institutions and struggling for equal rights. The crowning achievements of the civil rights movement projected into American politics a set of spiritual values that had been evolving among blacks for over a century. Forget about the influence of Africa on Egypt 2,500 years ago. It is the influence of Africa on America over the past 250 years that deserves our attention. But I know that my preference for an America-focused narrative over an Africa-focused one is an expression of my *values*. It is political; I cannot prove that it is right. Rather than dismissing those Afrocentric educators who disagree with me about this, I propose instead to argue with them respectfully. I urge others to do the same.

GLENN C. LOURY

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Contradictory Characters

The con man looms large in America's vision of itself. He was epitomized early, and monumentally, by Melville: *The Confidence-Man* is almost spookily perceptive of the character and its consequences. "Something further may follow of this Masquerade," Melville concludes. Something did. In one guise or another, the con man has recurred in our literature. (I've always liked O. Henry's Jeff Peters, a slicker who—quoting from memory—"took a dollar in another man's pocket as a personal offense.") Inevitably, when film arrived, the con man conned his way in. Some latter-day instances: *The Flim-flam Man, The Sting, Paper Moon, House of Games.*

Now there's **Traveller** (October), which, in character terms, maintains the tradition. The con man is likable: we root for him. He's the only criminal who always has our sympathy. R.W.B. Lewis conjectures that he, as a type, is important to us because he is the modern equivalent of Hermes, "the god of travelers ... the god of gambling and the deity of financial profit, the one involved in commercial dealings—particularly in shady ones."

Possibly the people in this film haven't read Lewis; nonetheless, "traveller" is the term for con man in some sections of the South—North Carolina and Kentucky are specified. Jim McGlynn's screenplay puts before us a trailer camp of con men in the region, with a boss who taxes and protects them. This is not explained, nor are some other things, like a two-handed gesture—three fingers up on each hand—that is a signal of recognition among members of the fraternity. We just accept the way things are.

A young fellow of about 20, Pat, arrives at the camp with his father's coffin from somewhere else, to get his father buried. His father had been one of the group but had left to marry, and the son is not welcome back. One of the group, Bokky, pities Pat and takes him on as an apprentice. They travel around in Bokky's pickup truck, practicing scams as they can, some of them quite clever, and meet an older traveller with whom they embark on a really large scam. Bokky needs big bucks to help a young woman whom he first conned and then bedded and whose small daughter needs an operation. (This ancient ploy is used with wide-eyed aplomb.) Things do not, of course, work out as expected for all concerned, but they work out.

The film, despite some potholes along the way, holds like a tale well told. Partly this is due to McGlynn's invention and dialogue, the latter pleasantly corn-pone, and to Jack Green's direction. Green, long a cinematographer (*Twister* and several Clint Eastwood films), does his own cinematography here and doesn't get gorgeous. His camera just tells the story lucidly.

Principally, however, *Traveller* succeeds because of Bill Paxton's performance as Bokky. Paxton has been around for fifteen years, sometimes in sizable parts (as in *Twister*), but has been, so to speak, invisible. Here he gets a good chance to be visible, and he is highly appealing in a taciturn, humane way. With touches of Joel McCrea and Jack Nicholson, he presents a man who can quietly take care of himself yet can quietly care for others. Paxton's con man, in proportion, fittingly joins the long American line.

It would be something of an offense to say nothing about **Hamsun**—an offense to the artists involved and, in a way, to readers—simply because it hasn't yet found an American outlet. *Hamsun* was part of a Danish series shown at the Walter Reade in New York—Danish, though the director and leading actor are Swedish and the subject Norwegian. It was produced by a consortium of Scandinavian groups and is accounted Danish because of its distributor.

The director was Jan Troell, little heard from since his Hollywood misadventures in the 1970s. He is the fine artist who made *The Emigrants* (1970) and *The New Land* (1972), a two-part work about Swedish immigration to this country in the nineteenth century, films epic in scope and beautiful in texture. (Troell, who began as a cinematographer, also shot both of those films and much of *Hamsun.*) The leading actor in those two films was Max von Sydow, and von Sydow plays Hamsun.

First, a reminder about Knut Hamsun. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1920, and by the time this film begins, in 1935, he was 76 years old and world-famous. Among his many works *Growth of the Soil* is probably best-known, but my own favorite is *Hunger.* (It was filmed in 1966 with Per Oscarsson ablaze in the autobiographical leading role.)

At the start of the film Hamsun is vocal

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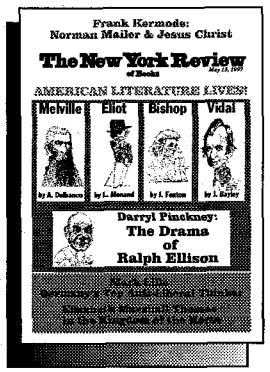

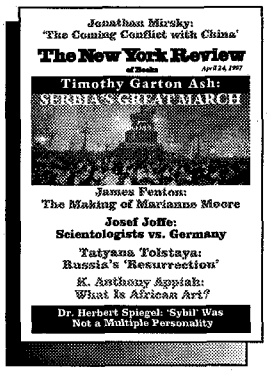

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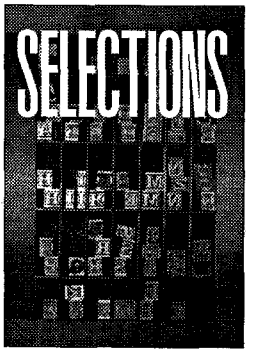

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in his approbation of Hitler. As war nears and Norway is subsequently invaded by Germany, Hamsun's support is unflinching. He disapproves of certain actions by the Germans and by Norwegian Nazis, but he never wavers fundamentally in support of a program that he thinks will give Norway a rightful place among nations.

When the war ends, he is a public embarrassment to the restored democratic government. They try to treat his politics as a dotard's wanderings; he goes through mental examinations, hospital, prison, trial, but he comes out of it all still firm in his beliefs. His last book, a memoir called *On Overgrown Paths*, is proof that his mind was clear.

The subject is interesting and difficult. How does one deal with the steadfastness of a man whose views are loathsome? (Hamsun claimed, probably with truth, that he never knew about the camps, but he certainly knew about the executions going on around him.) For a start, we need to learn how he came to his beliefs. In 1973 the German playwright Tankred Dorst wrote about Hamsun in *Ice Age* and, as I recall, dealt with the source of Hamsun's views; but this film, though two and a half hours long, does not.

The screenplay by Per Olof Enquist, based on a book by Thorkild Hansen, omits any reference to the fact that in his youth Hamsun emigrated to America *twice*, failed to establish himself here, and went home thoroughly disliking America. Along the way, he also acquired a loathing for British imperialism and, as *Hunger* indicates, an admiration for physical endurance and dedication—the sorts of qualities apostrophized in Leni Riefenstahl's Alpine films.

None of the above can begin to justify Hamsun's Nazi beliefs, but it does help to explain them. Without a basis, his actions in the film seem to float in midair. Many of the sequences are excellent, particularly one at Berchtesgaden, where Hitler receives the old man reverently and soon loses his temper because Hamsun keeps pressing questions about the Norway *Gauleiter*. I wish the film let us understand the source of Hamsun's politics as well as it dramatizes the convolutions of his character.

Still, whatever its faults, *Hamsun* is a treasure because of von Sydow's performance. This great actor, in Bergman's films and in some others, has enriched our film legacy with his art. One proof of his greatness is that his Hamsun can't be called his best work: it joins the wonders in his past—for just one instance, the grim weathered peasant in Bille August's *Pelle the Conqueror*.

Others in the *Hamsun* cast are excellent, notably Ghita Norby as his wife. But the center, something more than the center, is von Sydow's Hamsun, a towering tree at the start that is shaken but does not break. It was daring to make a film about this man because it doesn't end with contrition, but Troell's security was von Sydow, who can never have our sympathy but does have our frightened fascination.

In any case—to put the matter mildly—*Hamsun* deserves to be seen. •

The Suit in History

By Fouad Ajami

Egypt's Road to Jerusalem: A Diplomat's Story of the Struggle for Peace in the Middle East by Boutros Boutros-Ghali

(Random House, 384 pp., $27.50)

In this retrospect of a special time in the life and the career of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the dissimulation begins early. The man is away from home, he is writing for a foreign audience, some of the personages who know better are dead and gone; and he is at liberty to dissimulate. The dissimulation begins, quite literally, in the opening scene. It is October 25, 1977. Boutros-Ghali is at Cairo's airport to meet his wife Leia. They are of the upper crust; she is returning from Italy, and he, a professor at Cairo University, has just attended an exhibition of paintings by an American artist at the American library in Garden City. A reporter from *al-Ahram* breathlessly tells him that the president of the republic is looking for him. "A thousand congratulations, Doctor," she says, "on the ministry."

The professor is crestfallen, he tells us, for a "calamity" was about to turn his and his wife's life upside down. He is summoned before the prime minister, a tough and honest former policeman. He pleads that he does not want the Cabinet appointment. Surely an error has been made: he is a child of the "feudal" class, a Copt, and the revolution of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar al Sadat had sequestered his family's land and the fortune of his wife's family as well (they were Jewish chocolatiers from Alexandria). And there were other reasons for begging off: he was a busy man on the international circuit, a member of the Committee of Experts of the International Labor Organization, a member of the International Commission of Jurists, and Egypt would lose all those honors. Then there was his academic work; he did not want to give up the scholarly life, there were all the dissertations he was supervising.

But it was to no avail. The hour was late and the president of the republic, Muhammad Anwar al Sadat, had already appointed him to the Cabinet, and the decision had been announced. There was no specific Cabinet slot for him. He would be a minister in the presidency of the Council of Ministers, and he was to turn up the next morning at Abdin Palace to take the constitutional oath before the president of the republic.

This feigned horror at honor and appointments, at a *wizara*, a ministry, is transparent through and through. Consider the tangled background. On February 20, 1910, Boutros Ghali Pasha, grandfather of the newly designated minister, the first Coptic prime minister of Egypt, a man who was seen as a willing tool of British dominion and design, was struck down by a young assassin, a Muslim nationalist named Ibrahim Wardani, a pharmacist appalled by the subservience of the prime minister to the imperialists. Over the course of the preceding three decades, the Pasha had risen through the ranks of the political and social order of Egypt. His knowledge of European languages had caught the attention of the rulers at a time when Egypt was being incorporated into the dominion of European finance and commerce and diplomacy. In September 1881, he had been made first secretary of the Council of Ministers, and a year later he was awarded the rank of Pasha. He was the first Copt so honored.

In the years to come, the man's abilities, including a relentless capacity for intrigue, carried him to the highest realms of the polity: he was finance minister, he was minister for foreign affairs. The Pasha was good at staging scenes of resistance to British rule—but he threw his lot in with them, when matters truly counted. The one appointment

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Pasha could not have attained, it was thought, was that of prime minister; it had been the policy of Lord Cromer, the true master of the realm, who dominated the scene between 1883 and 1907, that it was easier to rule through a Muslim prime minister. But in a surprising turn of events, Cromer's successor, with the acquiescence of the Khedive, the nominal sovereign, broke with that rule and appointed Boutros Ghali.

It was not a wise choice. There was great agitation in the country; the stirrings of nationalism, and of communal resentment between Muslim and Copt, and of the hatred of British rule, were all on the rise. The Pasha was caught up in all that. In 1906, he had been unlucky to preside, as acting minister of justice, over the trial of peasants from the Delta village of Dinshawi who had gotten into an altercation with British soldiers. The panel of judges—Boutros Ghali and three British officials—had been severe: four peasants were sentenced to death, a large number were imprisoned, there were public floggings of some of the offenders. The Pasha did his masters' bidding. But Dinshawi shattered the veneer of this system of power. It became one of the great markers of modern Egyptian history, an episode of no less symbolic value to the colonizer and the colonized than the massacre of Amritsar, a generation later, in India. And more trouble was to come: the Pasha would acquiesce in sanctioning British rule over the Sudan, and there were indications that he looked with favor on a scheme that would extend by forty years British control of the Suez Canal. Wardani, the assassin, had served on the Pasha the writ of the nationalist movement. And the young assassin was to become a hero, celebrated in rhyme:

Wardani, Wardani,
ila atal al-Nusrani.

Wardani, Wardani,
he who killed the Nazarene.

True, the Ghalis had put the best possible face on that terrible episode. Defiantly, they had added the first name of their murdered ancestor to their last name. (Little did they know that they would give such exquisite pleasure to American yahoos who came to denounce Bootrooos-Bootrooos Ghali.) Still, a trauma had been visited on the Ghalis. And so it was obvious to all that the grandson's receipt of a ministerial appointment was a moment of vindication, his own and his family's.

The grandson summoned to Abdin Palace could see in this twist of fate a belated measure of justice. He knew the foreign world; he knew the lights and the language of France; he knew international law. He was a polished man, a snappy dresser. And now the revolution of July 23, 1952, which had uprooted his class, had found a new function for him. A quarter of a century after the soldiers had triumphed, *hafid al khiyana*, the grandson of treason, as the purists dubbed him, had found his way back into the world of political power.

"Why had President Sadat chosen me? I did not know," he writes. "...I returned home furious with myself." The spin never stops. Boutros-Ghali knows why he was chosen. Sadat, the cunning soldier, the child of the Delta who had inherited the earth from Gamal Abdel Nasser, was about to travel into a great, furious storm. Three weeks later, he would be standing before the Knesset in Jerusalem, and his newly appointed minister of state would take a memorable ride with Moshe Dayan from Ben-Gurion Airport to Jerusalem. And no sooner had he announced his willingness to go to the "far ends of the earth"—that short, blessed flight to Jerusalem, his great inspiration and his timeless gift—than he immediately lost his minister of foreign affairs and his minister of state for foreign affairs. Proud men of the state, creatures of what had transpired in Egypt in that Nasserite interlude, they would not countenance the journey to Jerusalem or be part of it. (Sadat was to lose yet another minister of foreign affairs, Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil, who resigned at Camp David, right as the ceremonies were to be held at the White House.) The ruler wanted a sure bet, a minister who would do his bidding, who would neither dare resign on him, nor want to do so. And so he picked a man with nothing to lose, a loner from the university, with no visible sources of political support.

It was an odd coming together. The ruler, a child of some poverty and hardship, had risen through the political underground and the army, and had come to some fame before the revolution of 1952 for his role in the assassination of an *ancien régime* figure very much like Boutros-Ghali's grandfather; the minister had known the ease of the *ancien régime* and then the longeurs of political banishment. It was vintage Sadat: he gave Boutros-Ghali the chance to wash himself clean, but with dirty water. He was redeeming and branding him at the same time: the pampered son of the upper class, the Copt with the Jewish wife, being assigned the task of reconciling Egypt to a new and difficult peace with its enemy. A circle was closed. Dr. Boutros, as Sadat called him when he did not like him, Peter when he was in the ruler's good

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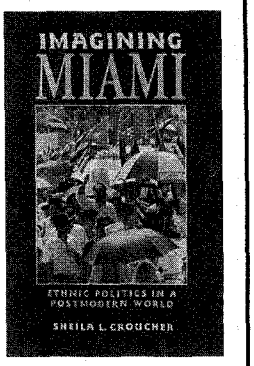

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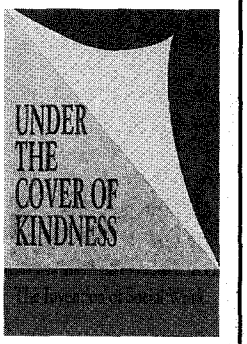

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graces, Pierre to his friends in Paris, had redeemed his grandfather, and merged with him.

He was born in Cairo, but Boutros-Ghali is, in his way, the perfect Alexandrine. He might have walked right out of Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria. Born in 1922 (he and Sadat were contemporaries, the ruler four years older than his minister), Boutros-Ghali had been formed in the pre-revolutionary years and in the elite culture of that time. The social etiquette, the Francophile manners, the finicky behavior that provoked Saul Bellow to describe him as a clone of the French actor Sacha Guitry, are all products of "Alex" and its soirées and its snobbery. Indeed, there has always been a belief that it is from Boutros-Ghali's life, and around him, that Durrell had spun one of the principal characters of *The Alexandria Quartet*: Nessim Hosnani, a man with a Byzantine face, almond-shaped, dark-eyed, clear-featured, rich, educated in the abstractions of Europe and removed from the soil and the hard realities of Egypt.

"Nessim, look at him. A true Copt. Brilliant, reserved. What an ornament he would make to the Egyptian diplomatic service.... But no, he will be a businessman because we Copts know it is useless, useless," an old Coptic squire, Nessim's father, says of his son to a British visitor as he rails against the British for what had become of the Copts under their rule. "True descendants of the ancients, the true marrow of Egypt," the Copts had been diminished by the British hatred of them. The good Bishop of Salisbury had said that the Oriental Christians were worse than the infidels, and the colonial administration had kept the Copts, "the brains of the country, the inheritors of the ancient Egyptian strain," at arm's length. But all was not lost, old Hosnani's wife believes. For there was Nessim: "Through him I hope one day we Copts will regain our place in Egypt.... But no more of this now."

Durrell had not been discreet in his portrait of Nessim: his man had also married a Jewish woman. "I would like to make you a small confidence, I am hoping to be married," Nessim tells a British friend. He feared that his mother would not take to the idea, because the girl in question was not "in society," and besides, the girl was Jewish, and "you know the absurd Coptic terror of Jews. We even have the proverb: 'If you let the Jewish fox into your vineyard it will eat your life.' "

It had not been brilliant, that Alexandrine world, nor true, nor deep. Cotton and the cotton boom had made that world in a hurry and out of nothing. All the claims of aristocracy and pedigree were forced. The place was a spiritless backwater. And the young soldiers who overthrew the monarchy had been eager to extirpate all traces of it in themselves. They were through with Alexandria and its dandies, through with the northward-looking, sybaritic Mediterranean. They took their country deep into Arab matters. Decades later, after that world had become a benign apparition, after the poems of Cavafy were long forgotten and the dust had gotten into the town (as Durrell nostalgically wrote upon encountering the place on a brief return), and the Jews and the Armenians and the Italians and the Lebanese and the Greeks of Alexandria had taken to the road, Sadat had given a figure of that era a new lease on life.

So here is the ruler and his minister. In September 1979, six months after the Camp David summit, the latter is summoned to a presidential retreat in Ismailia, overlooking the Suez Canal. "Sadat was wearing a blue exercise suit and white shoes, and I thought to myself that the shoes didn't go at all with the clothes." The minister had been making the rounds of the nonaligned world and of Europe, and he reported to Sadat that Egypt was dangerously isolated, that its peace with Israel was a separate peace and it was doomed. "I want you to move your chair," Sadat tells Boutros-Ghali, so as to have a view of the canal and the Sinai Desert on its east bank. "I do not wish to underestimate the magnitude of the problems and worries that Egyptian diplomacy is facing. But all these problems and the worries pale in comparison with this land we have regained. They are not worth one square meter of this land, which we have regained without spilling the blood of my children." Boutros-Ghali recounts this episode in his memoir, without irony: the cultivated mandarin thinking of the shoes that didn't match, and the peasant-soldier dreaming of the liberation of his land, seeing in the return of the Sinai his own redemption, his compensation for the abuse that the other Arabs were throwing his way.

BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It wasn't easy for Boutros-Ghali to find things to do. He was asked to draft Sadat's speech to the Knesset, and he worked on the speech, consulting the Zionist biographies at hand, the same biographies, he said, which he had used to construct arguments against the Zionists—but not a single sentence of his draft found its way into the president's speech. The "cultural and literary" aspects of his speeches, he recalls, did not fit. When asked by Vice President Hosni Mubarak for a discussion of African matters, he put before the Air Force officer a book of 800 pages that he had written on African problems. Mubarak grunted and pushed it aside.

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He was a prickly man. He fought for his language, he fought for a role. He was humored but denied real political power. It is easy to understand the exasperation of his political colleagues with the dilettante insisting that conceits such as the "virtuous city" (for Jerusalem) and peace between the "House of Israel" and the "House of Palestine" had to find their way into political communiqués. He was given a marginal beat in Africa, and in the Francophone states of Africa, to do what he could to counteract the Arab campaign against Egypt.

The journey to Jerusalem had given Boutros-Ghali his chance, but at bottom he was a man unreconciled to the new peace. He found it hard to talk to Israelis. They were soldiers and farmers, they knew no French (Yitzhak Shamir did, but he was a hard-liner), they were provincials. Dr. Boutros would have preferred dealing with the Labor Party, but they were out of power; and, besides, Sadat favored Begin, because he knew that he could deal with him, that Begin could "deliver." The Jews of Alex, the wealthy ones, the ones whom Dr. Boutros knew in his youth, had quit Egypt for France and Switzerland; none of the *comme il faut* crowd of Alex had ended up in Israel.

It was a stubborn bunch in Israel that he was asked to deal with. There was Begin, "as rigid as a Central European lawyer from the early decades of the century." There was Sharon, stuffing himself with "mouthfuls of rice and fish" and waving off the reports of *Agence France-Presse* as the dispatches of French anti-Semites. They were killjoys, the Israelis: Boutros-Ghali spent a beautiful day in a country house outside Washington and returned to the negotiations only "to be immersed once again in Israeli manipulation and procrastination." He was a person of style and they were not. On the road, though, he found some solace—others who knew the obstinate ways of the Israelis, who took him into their confidence and told him to persevere. No less a figure than Pope John Paul II, Boutros-Ghali tells us, spoke to him in this vein, when the minister called on His Holiness in June 1979. They discussed Palestinian self-rule, and the Pope said that he "knew well 'the mentality of the Jewish leaders that you are negotiating with, because most of the Israeli negotiators have their origins in my homeland.... Cooperation with them is not easy, but you must continue to negotiate with them.'" They spoke in French, Boutros-Ghali recalls, but the Pope spoke with a "Polish accent."

It is in a story about Strasbourg that we meet the quintessential Boutros-Ghali, who would do the town from Sutton Place years later, in his incarnation as secretary-general of the United Nations. He and Moshe Dayan turned up in Strasbourg, in October 1979, for a debate before the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. They are both dressed in gray suits. But there, Pierre remembers, the similarities ended. "Your suits are the same color, but the difference in tailoring is enormous," a French journalist reportedly tells Boutros-Ghali, who is delighted to explain the difference: his suit was made by an expensive Italian tailor, Dayan's suit was made in a small Israeli shop.

We are then treated to Boutros-Ghali's rendition of the great joust at Strasbourg. He spoke in French, Dayan spoke in English. He warms up to his audience, and to his themes; he relives the drama of his speech and gives us the text practically verbatim. And in a session in which he and Dayan answered the members' questions, he will have us know, he put the Israeli to shame: "Truth be told, my answers brought much stronger applause than did Dayan's. This was obvious to the Israeli minister. He appeared disheartened and even angry." It takes a particular kind of obnoxiousness to write such prose, and Boutros-Ghali has it in abundance.

"With the sweet taste of victory, I looked at Dayan. I saw that the man was vulnerable." Dayan had been a legendary soldier; he had lost his eye as a youth on the Israeli-Lebanese frontier; he had led his country to victory in the Suez campaign, and he was not without a flair of his own for words. But the wonder-boy of *The Alexandria Quartet*, at home in Europe, had put him to flight. "Stop behaving like this," Dayan is said to have told him. "Fate has pampered you.... I did not study at great universities. I had no opportunity to read great books.... I learned English in a British Mandate jail." Boutros-Ghali says he felt shame upon hearing this. Based on what we know of him from his book and his career, however, it is obvious that he is blind to that kind of introspection. And no sooner does he give voice to a little bit of shame than he takes it back. He rehearses his petty triumph through the recalled words of a Turkish diplomat. "I feel sorry for Dayan," the man told him. "Throughout the debate he was on the defensive because of your fierce attacks."

It was not just the shabby suits of the Israelis, or the hard ways of Central Europe that stuck to their leaders, which made the negotiations the ordeal that they seem to have been, in Boutros-Ghali's rendition. At heart, the Israelis were in pursuit of a separate peace with Egypt, and Boutros-Ghali was a man in search of a "comprehensive peace" and a solution for the Palestinians. The minister would have wanted to hold the line, but there was his president, eager to cut a deal, eager to walk away from the posers of the nonaligned movement, from the Arabs belittling him and his peace, from the Palestinians in their political kingdom in Beirut. Running through this account of the road to Jerusalem and Camp David is the voice of a minister second-guessing his leader and his style of negotiation. "The Egyptian negotiating position was weak, and our style of negotiating only increased that weakness." The trouble lay in the pharaoh: Boutros-Ghali and his colleagues in the Egyptian hierarchy worried that "Sadat would make concessions far beyond our worst fears. Sadat was the boss. He could ignore his advisers, bypass the Assembly, override the wishes of the Egyptian people, and he enjoyed demonstrating his power."

He had ridden with Sadat, and the ride would eventually take him all the way to his reign at the United Nations. Now he is eager to set the record straight, eager not to suffer the fortunes of Sadat's reputation, eager to establish that he tried to apply the brakes on the enthusiasm of a reckless leader. The ghost of his grandfather hovered overhead; and he wanted to exorcise it. He wanted the power, he wanted to do Europe in style, he wanted to give interviews to his old friends at *Le Monde*, but he had to do the bidding of a capricious master suddenly wooing the Jews. He was the bearer of all the tired ideologies of the 1960s and 1970s—*tier-mondisme*, Pan-

Night

Nothing loves the spine. Breath is far
and cold, a window's fat

eye rising to the edge of lawn,
a pyracantha's weight of thorn and berry.

From inside the room, nothing looks like
reflection; it's us that separates light's

parts and whole into the sum we cannot
hold, lying side by side, our bodies

closing our mind's eye. Now it's us refusing
shine. Now it's us that's missing.

LAURIE LAMON

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Arabism, Pan-Africanism, the Euro-Arab dialogue. But those were precisely the sacred cows that the soldier at the helm of Egypt was slaying. Sadat had his fill with "nonalignment," and wrote it off as a rotten movement riddled with radicalism and dominated by the Soviet Union.

Stay strong, Sadat would exhort his minister, as his minister recounted to him the battles of the Organization of African Unity or of the Arab League or the warnings of European socialists about the perils of a "separate peace" between Egypt and Israel. The ruler could afford the indifference. He had been a "Free Officer" and a bearer of the political truth of the land of Egypt. No grandfather of his had sent Egyptian fellaheen to the gallows on behalf of the colonial masters. He had known political imprisonment in that searing period of Egypt's nationalism. At a time when Boutros-Ghali was involved in a great love affair with a "beautiful Cairene"—a Cairene, he wants us to know, who had been drawn by Matisse—Sadat was in the maelstrom of conspiracy and underground politics.

Sadat had sent men to war in 1973, and had lost his own brother in that war. He could glimpse the way out for his country: peace with Israel, treasure from America, the return of the land in the Sinai that his legendary predecessor Nasser had lost in 1967. He was not frightened of the bogeyman of a "separate peace." He did not have the squeamishness and the nervousness of his minister. In time, Sadat took to Menachem Begin, but his minister never could do the same, and he was seized with panic when given the assignment of hosting Begin and his wife and appearing with them in public. His personal history was forever throwing shadows across his path.

The minister coming along on a great revolution could not quite shed the old fidelities. Return to that ride that Boutros-Ghali took with Dayan, that Saturday night, November 18, 1977, when Sadat came to Jerusalem. After some small talk about antiquities—a mutual interest—Boutros-Ghali insisted on telling Dayan about the "Pan-Arab and Islamic dimension[s]" of the Palestine problem. "When we see a Palestinian brother living under the weight of occupation in jail, I said to Dayan, we all feel like Palestinians whose rights have been violated; we feel the anguish and bitterness of having lost a homeland. The entire Arab world is a single whole. Arabs still feel the loss of 'Andalus' (Spain). The loss of Palestine was a colonialist imposition upon the Arab world by the great outside powers." These were all the falsely sentimental clichés of the arriviste. Sadat would not have spoken in such terms. It was to put an end to the legend of Arabism, and to all that Arabism had heaped upon Egypt, that he had journeyed to Israel. It was his time to journey westward, as he dispatched the aide in elegant Italian suits to Kampala and Addis Ababa and Havana and Mogadishu. The ruler was never in a mood to hear the breathless reports of his minister as to what had transpired in those Third World conferences: he knew that scene and it was behind him. Something in Sadat never warmed to his minister. He gave Boutros-Ghali a place, but he passed him over, repeatedly, for the position of foreign minister, and left him at the rank of minister of state for foreign affairs. Boutros-Ghali explains this as the ruler's reluctance to appoint a Coptic foreign minister. There is some truth in that, but it may not be quite so simple. For there was cunning aplenty in Sadat—it was his saving gift in the turmoil of the Nasser years—and he must have known of the unease of his minister with his ways.

Fate, the cruel fate of Sadat, came on October 6, 1981, when he was murdered amid his "sons" of the armed forces in Cairo, on a day commemorating the war that he had launched in October 1973. That day is itself a commentary on the relationship between ruler and minister. When the end came for Sadat at a military parade, surrounded by his ministers and aides, Boutros-Ghali was on the beach in Alexandria. He had wearied, he tells us, of official duty. He wanted to catch the October sun of Alex: "I had met my wife in Alexandria and the call of nostalgia was overwhelming."

He had been reproached by one of his colleagues: the *Raiss*, the leader, wanted all his ministers at the parade. It was a tense time for the *Raiss* and for the state. A month earlier, Sadat had torn up the unwritten compact of the land and launched a repression, rounding up some 1,500 of the nation's best and brightest and hauling them off to prison. Things were stretched to the breaking point. There were rumors of trouble, of plots in the army. Sadat wanted to display his mastery and his serenity in the storm. But Boutros-Ghali's wife allayed his remorse: no one would notice his absence among the dignitaries. (A live ass is better than a dead lion, Leia Boutros-Ghali is said to have told her husband on a prior occasion.) It was a lucky call, that autumnal trip to the Alexandrine shore, for the plotters reviled Boutros-Ghali most of all.

News of the ruler's death reached Boutros-Ghali on the beach. He was taking in the pleasure of the place with his wife and with another couple, all of them lovers of Cavafy. A scent of the vanished world hung over them. And then an old woman disturbed their exquisite calm to tell them that there were reports, from Radio Monte Carlo, that trouble had erupted in Cairo. The minister rushes back to the capital. And some lines of Cavafy come to him:

> Why this sudden unrest and confusion?
> (How solemn their faces have become.)
> Why are the streets and squares clearing quickly,
> And all return to their homes, so deep in thought?

Boutros-Ghali has written this book because it is what remains for him after he was rebuffed in his bid for a second term at the helm of the United Nations. To the unsuspecting, it will read like the work of a cosmopolitan man who did duty among lesser men, a man of noble bearings and academic leanings and a taste for paintings and books and antiquities, called upon to do bureaucratic and political work that he had not sought himself. But in countless, unintended ways, we can see what a calamitous choice he was for the U.N. post. (Calamitous, in this instance, is a relative term, as this was a post that had been occupied by Kurt Waldheim.)

Had we been given this glimpse of Boutros-Ghali earlier, we might have been able to foresee this dandy out of Durrell arriving in Sarajevo to tell its suffering people that theirs was a rich people's war, that he could name for them at least ten places in the world which were worse off than their city. We might have understood that a man who worried about the fit between shoes and suits was not the right man for a crisis in which moral choices mattered. We might have been better prepared for the arrogance and the obtuseness of a man lecturing about the end of national sovereignty and the dawn of a new imperial dispensation under U.N. auspices even as soldiers under U.N. command covered up the genocidal deeds of the Serbs. We might have sounded an alarm when his promoters said, on the eve of his selection in 1991, that he was "born to be secretary-general."

The one thing that Boutros-Ghali fought for, the one issue over which he displayed real anger and demonstrated real engagement, was the matter of his tenure at the United Nations. He felt cheated by the powers. He had done their dirty work in the Balkans, he had drawn an equivalence between killers and victims, he had sent to Bosnia commanders of unspeakable cynicism, but they had done him in and denied him his pay-off. Clinton and Albright [illegible] to him what Sadat [illegible]

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he denied him his due and passed him over for the position of foreign minister.

He had not known America and Americans, and could never bond with them. All that he knew of America was that it was the "host-country" to the U.N. He never grasped America's primacy in the world body; the Americans, in his view of things, were to foot the bill and stay out of the way. They were to be the enforcers of his writs—as they were in Mogadishu, snookered into a humiliation hunting down a nemesis of Boutros-Ghali from the days of his African diplomacy, the warlord Mohammed Farah Aidid. He waited for the French to come to the rescue. He tried to revive the corpse of Third Worldism as a counter to American power. He winked to the Africans that he was one of them, that he had long seen the Africanism of Egypt as a better alternative than its venture into Asia and Pan-Arabism. He rallied the Arabs who had disdained him during Camp David, and told them in quiet ways that he was being pushed out by the Clinton administration because he had stood up to Israel during that tragic accident in April 1996, when Israeli fire-power killed 100 civilians in Qana, in southern Lebanon, who had sought shelter at a United Nations compound. It was a doomed business. In the end he was left with only an Arab campaign on his behalf and the steady support of A. M. Rosenthal, who wrote a good number of columns about a literate and cosmopolitan man of many cultures, a friend of the peace of Camp David, who deserved a better hearing from American officials.

It was a great road, that road that appears in the title of Boutros-Ghali's book, that road to Jerusalem. But it was blazed by Sadat. We were lucky that the man calling history's shots in this region was the poor soldier from the Delta, with a childhood of deprivation behind him and an anxiety about his dark skin, a plotter who had flirted with Nazi agents in the Second World War, a man who partook of assassinations and the underground, who knew no French and had no idea who Matisse was. He was *ibn balad*, a son of the soil, who had the fellah's ability to look into the soul of powerful outsiders, to divine how he could get around them even as he gave them what they desired. On his way out of the Arab-Israeli feud, out of Egypt's Pan-Arab captivity, Sadat had required the services of a worldly and grasping minister, and so he assigned him a part, a bit part, in the great drama. Boutros-Ghali took it, and now, two decades later, he quibbles. To hear him now, he was there and he wasn't there, he was for the peace and he was against the peace, he did Sadat's business but he was, at heart, a man of other fidelities. He will soon be forgotten; but blessed be the memory of the soldier who made war in 1973 and made peace four years later. •

Identity and Diffidence

BY ROBERT BOYERS

Reading in the Dark by Seamus Deane

(Knopf, 246 pp., $23)

Irish history is bad history. So says one character in Seamus Deane's first novel, and no other character in the novel seems much inclined to deny it. In a land of "small places," as it is described here, people have too often made "big mistakes." They lie to themselves and to one another. They rely on old certainties when they might better have abandoned them. They carry around "stale" secrets and bitter resentments. Their courage is too often merely a willingness to absorb meaningless defeats and inflict pointless damage. For all their eloquence and their gift for storytelling, they are not, typically, much good at distinguishing truth from fiction, the past from the present. The language of feud and retribution, of shame and fatedness, is on every tongue.

Of course, clear-sighted Irish men and women can also see plenty to be proud of in their past, but all agree that the history of Northern Ireland contains every kind of motive for resentment, rage, and hopelessness. "The whole situation makes men evil," says one of Deane's priests, and "evil men make the whole situation." To live in a place like Derry in the 1940s and '50s, when Deane's novel is set, is to remember failed rebellions and to confront, day after day, British policemen whom one

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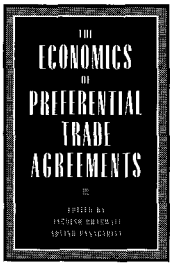

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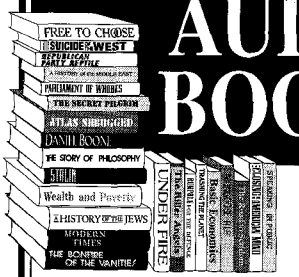

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has learned to regard as intolerable, in their casual brutalities and in their unwelcome efforts at commiseration and intimacy. Most of what goes on in such a place has nothing to do with politics, as it happens, but always there is a sense of "the whole situation," and persons who might well have looked to themselves as the source of present difficulties are embittered and coarsened by the long sense of injustice that they have had to bear. The priests speak, when they can, of "an inner peace nothing can reach" and "no insult can violate," but the Irish refuse to forget the "cruel birth" of their country, and they suffer their history like a perpetual humiliation.

Deane's novel is no polemic. It presents no case for or against his countrymen, no brief for a particular reading of Irish history. It is mainly the story of a boy's coming of age, and it is told mostly in very brief chapters with titles such as "Maths Class," "Crazy Joe," "The Facts of Life" and "Sergeant Burke." The chapters mostly cover minor events: the boy encounters and engages with family members and strangers, with schoolmates, priests, and teachers. He goes to classes, gets in and out of trouble, and generally behaves very much in the way we might expect of a boy in such a time and place. The sequence is strictly chronological, and incidents are often "necessary" only in the sense that they convey the flavor of the narrator's experience.

The novel is haunted by the story of a series of betrayals, a story revealed in bits and pieces picked out of fragmentary confessions and intimations. The betrayals are personal and political, and, though they have the power to corrupt lives in Deane's little world, they never take control of the narrative. The boy at the center of the novel makes what he can of the fragments, understanding dimly, then more clearly, that members of his own family are implicated in the various betrayals. At times he is angry and confused, at other times he is overwhelmed by pity and tenderness. Alert to the deceptions of priests, policemen, and politicians, he is properly skeptical of traditions and myths, but he entertains no serious possibility of reversing deep-rooted customs or assumptions. Blindness, like love or hate, is a condition that persists, no matter the inducements to see or to change.

A reader who comes to Deane's novel without substantial understanding of "the troubles" of Northern Ireland will learn little from the narrative. It refers, vaguely, to early struggles and uprisings, but it offers no hard information, and its ideas are rudimentary. Dramatic encounters are briefly recalled. People refer, occasionally, to protests "at the founding of the new state" or to retaliation for a particular injustice, but the encounters as recalled are not especially important in themselves. The IRA gunmen on a roof are no more comprehensible than the policemen who surround them. Riots are just events that happen, like the death of a child or the infidelity of a husband. If people sometimes behave in particular ways for particular reasons, they are rarely good reasons, and acknowledging them leads nowhere. "There was a belief" in this thing or that, in this cause or that dark necessity, but it does no one any good, apparently, to persist in the belief or to abandon it.

Deane tells the stories of people's lives with a crisp lyricism, though it is not always easy for a reader to remain interested in characters who have few thoughts and little inclination to open themselves to sharp sensory experiences. People are said to live in silence, to feel hopelessly separated from one another, "trapped," desiring routinely "to be free of the immediate pressures." The regret for missed opportunities darkens every consciousness. My Father? "He would have loved...." My Grandfather? He "realized for sure the mistake he had made...." My own life? "Rehearsing conversations I would never have." To make something of lives so committed to the desultory and unconsummated is a challenge, and Deane is not always up to it.

Lacking the will to analyze and the appetite for metaphysics or morals, Deane is content to set things down as if they spoke for themselves. But often they do not say much more than "failure" and "regret." Deane's people are so inured to the facts of their lives that they are almost constitutionally averse to development. To his credit, Deane resists the temptation to claim for these characters qualities that they do not possess, but too often we feel that they are important to him for reasons that he does not know how to share. The work sometimes reads more like a memoir than a novel, in that people and events matter only because they were actually a part of the narrator's experience.

As if alert to the prospect that Deane's book will seem to many readers thin, lacking in ideas and development, Seamus Heaney has praised it as "sudden" and compares it to Isaac Babel. But Deane's book is not "sudden" like a Babel story, and it is without many of the virtues that make a Babel story distinctive. Deane's irony, only occasionally in evidence, is broad, more an irony of circumstance than of voice. We do not find in Deane the internal conflict—as between the physical and spiritual—that seethes everywhere just beneath the surface in Babel. Deane knows and accepts his people and his place as they are; he does not allow what he knows to raise in him the self-doubt that gives such edge to Babel's laconic fictions.

In Deane's book, we have the material for moral inquiry, but the inquiry is not pursued. Still, there are passages of exceptional vitality. The boy sits through a memorable "facts of life" session with the school's spiritual director and is confounded by unfamiliar words and concepts. ("Ask him, you stupid shit, ask him, that's what you're here for, but I couldn't do anything except stare at him.") The mother suffers a breakdown and begins to communicate long-buried thoughts in a language strangely suggestive and obscure. ("Paradise was not far away when I died.") The voluble police sergeant confesses that he has beaten suspects he knew to be innocent, since not to have done so "would have looked strange." Throughout the novel, often in unlikely places, things come suddenly to life. We remember that these people are more than the sum of their refusals and resignations. The mother, who absorbs several varieties of humiliation, is eloquent in repudiating the "dirty politics" of the British and the routine admonitions directed at those who struggle and resist. The father, hardworking and forlorn, is stubbornly faithful and resilient, and his aversion to posturing is so powerful that he chastises his young sons, on their knees in prayer, for making "a meal of it" and "trying to look like little saints."

Though *Reading in the Dark* is a first novel, Deane has been a literary presence since 1972, when he published the first of several volumes of poems. More recently he attracted attention as the general editor of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing, 550-1990*, a massive three-volume compendium that presents not only an extraordinary range of literary voices but an abundance of "texts," from incendiary pamphlets to political speeches and historical accounts of public events. The controlling idea of the anthology appears to be that it is futile and misleading, at least in the case of the Irish, to isolate literature from politics. And Irish writers have been more or less unanimous in affirming this sense of their work. Yeats wrote that Irish writers were necessarily "maimed" by the "great hatred" that they carried around with them, and that his own meeting with the Fenian leader John O'Leary was singularly important in bringing "the poet in[to] the presence of his theme." Even

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those who did not choose to dwell on political themes, such as Joyce, were deeply absorbed with questions of marginality and identity. Deane himself has said that "the dominant public experience of my career has been the political crisis in Northern Ireland."

What is most remarkable about Deane's novel, then, is its refusal to permit the lives of its characters to be wholly swallowed by politics. Desultory their lives may be, but the presumptive causes are more various than any single-minded obsession with "the situation." And, of course, the novelist who, like Deane, immerses himself in various lives is always likely to discover occasions for verbal extravagance and merriment. Examples abound in this book. A classroom instructor in mathematics leaves an indelible picture of manic aggression and wit, unleashing a relentless verbal assault on the "brain dead" and "memory-less" among his charges. Is this a reflection of an inveterate Irish inferiority complex that can issue also in physical brutality and torture? Deane does not instruct us to read it that way. Does the instructor's emphasis on "corruption," and on the "evolutionary cul-de-sac" represented by especially recalcitrant students, not produce in them a resentment and defensiveness that can be fed and turned to violence by skillful demagogues? Deane charts no such consequence. His chapter on "Maths Class" offers, in place of diagnosis, the marvelous and the unaccountable, an expression of verbal playfulness that, in spite of his punitive sarcasm, requires neither justification nor relevance.

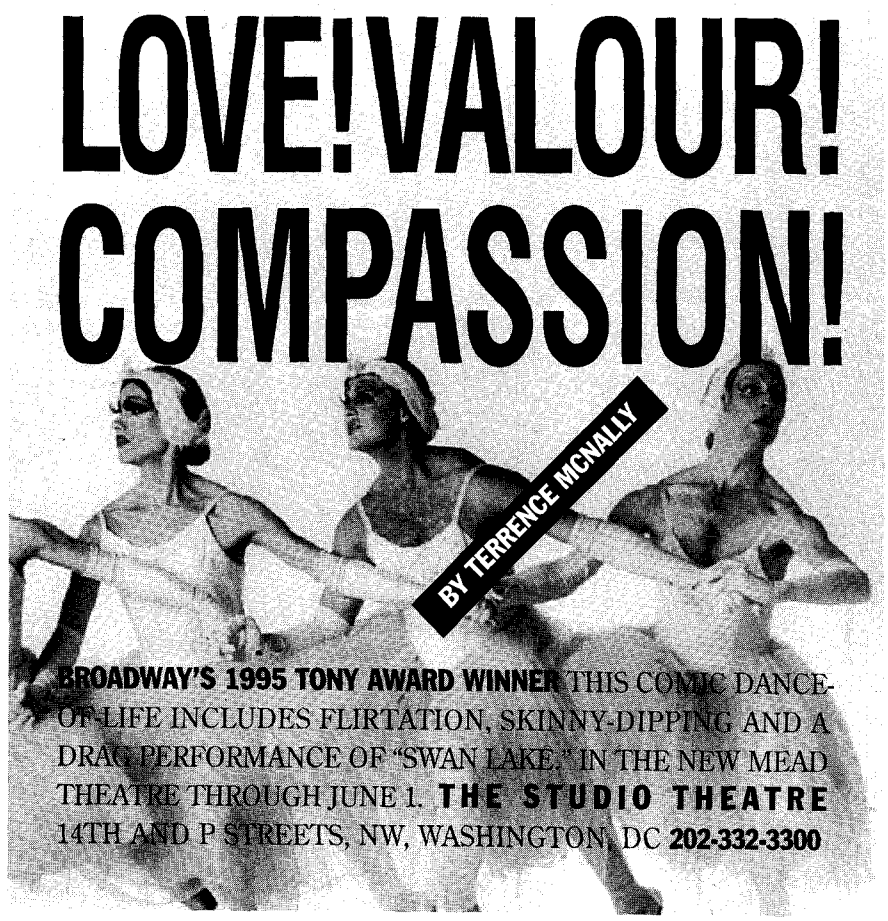
Where the political does take center stage in Deane's novel, moreover, it may well seem indistinguishable from the dissemination of propaganda. In 1956, an Anglican priest in British army uniform visits the boy's school as a part of the "battle for the hearts and minds of men" against the specter of world communism. The battle is represented by the genial priest as "a battle of faithlessness against faith; a battle of subtle wiles against manly freedom; a battle of cold atheism against the genial warmth of that Christian faith that has lit so many Irish hearts down the centuries." In the face of this battle, the disputes that divide Irish men and women are said to be "no more than family quarrels." A "traditional" society, whatever its internal dissensions, will wish to uphold "the eternal verities," says the priest; its people will know what is truly important to its survival and what is, in the long term, incidental.

The boys, of course, are mostly deaf to these appeals. Accustomed to hearing things that they know to be untrue, they rarely pay much attention to the particulars of the case presented to them. What they are likely to hear in the way of political discourse can be readily dismissed. It is encouraging to note how little susceptible to the priest's calculated pieties are the Irish schoolboys. Yet neither are these children on their way to anything approaching a mature grasp of political issues. At least Deane makes no such claim for them.

The best that can be said for the political intelligence of the adults in Deane's world is that occasionally they feel sorry for the troubles of others and reflect, in a spirit of resigned incomprehension, on the way that events elude their grasp. "It's a strange world," says the boy's father, moved by his own encounter with the father of a British soldier shot dead by an IRA sniper in the course of a street search. "I feel for him. Even if his son was one of those," the father says. No more comes from him on this score, no more is to be expected. His reality does not demand complexity of him, or a sustained reconsideration of old positions. The facts are what matter: the curfews, the street barricades, the armored trucks, "the avocado battle-dress of the soldiers," the intermittent gunshots, the routine humiliations of search, suspicion and seizure.

Does it matter that the story of these people is told from the perspective of a working-class boy? Deane wrings from the tale very little of the easy charm and naïveté of the usual first-person child's narrative. No effort is made to simulate the familiar headlong rush of infant volubility, the childish locutions or fragmentary reticences intended to evoke innocence or embarrassment. Even where there is an immediacy in the language, in the contrivance of a retrospective present tense, the language belongs to an adult voice: "She would come down with me," he writes of his mother, "her heart jackhammering, and her breath quick ... her face in a rictus of crying, but without tears."

Just so, where sequences are organized to make a point, we feel that it is a point elected by the adult novelist, who is at once inside the experience he narrates and well past it. "Was that house really a brothel?" the boy wonders, retreating from an open door and the painted face of "a young woman with tousled hair.... What would it be like with her?" he wonders further, later whispering to himself the chastening words of St. Ignatius on the subject of mortal sin. But we stand always a little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outside of this confusion, kept deliberately out by the poetic cadence and elevation of the writing, as in the following conclusion to the chapter called "Brothel":

> And still the vision of that young woman drifted there, vague one moment, the next vivid, reaching for me, unloosing the clasp of her skirt that rustled down as I leapt back and came forward, blurring inwardly, making my election.

More important than the boy's perspective is his working-class background, however little Deane wishes to make it an issue. There are, in this world, few places to hide from the indignities that the boy comes to expect. The occasional beatings or taunts administered by local policemen are matched by the assaults of street gangs and the bruising insults of others alert to every prospect of inflicting abuse. Growing up among unsophisticated persons nursing their own memories of want and hurt, the boy has little chance of escaping the vindictive parochialism of his community. Sometimes, in Deane's world, it seems that the worst thing a decent person can do is to talk to a policeman, as if to do so were to sell one's soul to the devil.

As in other Irish works focused on betrayal, the central term in the lexicon of abuse here is "informer." To inform is to forfeit any semblance of self-respect and to sever irreparably one's ties to the community. Forgivable in principle, the informer is in practice regarded as grotesque and out of bounds. When the father utters, about a member of his own family, the words "he was an informer," the son can only beg him to unsay them. "Say nothing," he repeats to himself. "Never say. Never say." Members of families thought to have contained an informer are tainted, carry a curse and may expect at any time to be punished for the unhappiness that has befallen them. To marry into such a family is not only ill-advised, it is a breaking of "sacred laws."

Like everything else in Deane's world, his people may regret certain attitudes and practices regarding informers, but the attitudes are too deeply rooted to deplore or to reform. When the boy finds himself suspected of informing on a few street toughs who had intended to rough him up, he finds no support, even within his own family. Never mind that he gave no information to the policemen who questioned him. Never mind that no movement or organization was at stake, no oath violated. "Have you no self-respect, no pride?" screams his mother.

> "Thank God my father's too ill to hear about this—the shame alone would finish him. A grandson of his going to the police!"
>
> "I didn't go to the police. I threw a stone at them."
>
> "Same thing in the circumstances. . . ."

Nor is the usually more generous father more understanding. "Why didn't I take a few punches. . .? Didn't I know what sort of people the police were? Had I no guts, no sense, no savvy, no shame?" Tempted to mark up the entire demand-system of the community to "stupidity," the boy concludes that his father and all the others are "right" but "wrong too." To live in such a place, it seems, is to accept that wisdom consists in learning to tolerate what in any case will not change. If it is stupid to be battered for no good reason, and stupid to regard as "informing" what is no such thing, and stupid to live perpetually in fear of disapproval by persons who are ignorant and malicious, it is also stupid to pretend that one can get along in such a place without making substantial concessions to the reigning shibboleths and expectations.

Of course, *Reading in the Dark* is a novel. What would seem contradiction in another genre is here variousness and complexity. Deane need not tell us that he disapproves of much that passes for the facts of life in Derry for us to grasp their awfulness and their sometimes terrible vitality. And, for all the stubborn blindness in many of Deane's characters, there is a tenacity that can seem almost wonderful. The situation of Northern Ireland, discernible here only in fragments, allows for a complicated communal life, however crippling its myths. Deane's novel is driven by an impressive power of remembrance, and by a conviction that the proper business of the novelist is to make ordinary lives in their own way eventful, so that possibility exists even where fatality reigns.

ROBERT BOYERS is Tisch Professor of Arts and Letters at Skidmore College and editor of *Salmagundi*.

The global economy and American wages.

Fear Not

BY JAGDISH BHAGWATI

I.

Are we in the midst of a virulent form of mutant capitalism, prompted by the spread of markets and the arrival of the global economy, that permanently imperils the earnings of our blue-collar workers, accentuates economic insecurity among white-collar workers, undermines our sense of personal identity and autonomy, endangers our democracy and is ushering in a dark and unprecedented era that requires us to rethink the economic and social institutions of a vanishing age? Or are we experiencing only transitory difficulty and distress, whose magnitude is exaggerated by the media, with the consequence that pessimistic perceptions have overtaken optimistic realities?

The tug of war between these views is momentous in its consequences. If the dismal view is correct, and we stand aside as silent witnesses to an unfolding history whose import we fail to grasp, we may unleash chaotic responses by the distressed in our society, who will be denied a significant and appropriate response to their predicament. And if we rush in to fix what isn't broken, and wind up denying ourselves the undoubted economic benefits of markets and participation in the global economy, we would be committing an unforced economic error and damaging ourselves and our prospects.

Intellectuals prosper, of course, by proclaiming new ages and new epochs. And the celebrity of intellectuals is immune to the tests of time and refutation. Just ask yourself: Where did "the affluent society" go? It was here to stay, in John Kenneth Galbraith's famous analysis, though it needed repair. And what ever happened to the arrival of "technostructure" and the new era of the long managerial view in corporate planning and of permanent jobs, announced again by Galbraith? Indeed, with many today lamenting the crippling dominance of shareholders bent on "short-termism,"

JAGDISH BHAGWATI's new book, *A Stream of Windows: Unsettling Reflections on Trade, Immigration and Democracy*, will be published by MIT Press this year.

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and many others blasting "downsizing" as a low road that is undermining jobs, the proponents of the epoch of "technostructure" and "managerial capitalism" have surely lost to the serious scholars who scoffed at them.

And intellectuals tend to prefer pessimism. Recall the "declinism" that swept through the United States in the 1980s—and contrast it to our relative prosperity today as Japan, once feared as omnipotent and touted as a role model by many, is now seen in its distress as having joined the human race after all. And as Europe, with its low growth rates and high unemployment rates, has become in its entirety the sick man of Europe, the sick man that is Europe, where might Lester Thurow hide his confident prediction of 1992 that, of the three economic giants today, Europe would emerge the "winner?" No lesser calamity has overtaken his famous declaration that "GATT is dead," a diagnosis that was especially egregious when he made it in Davos at the World Economic Forum: even as he spoke, GATT was being besieged by lobbyists wanting to include their causes on its agenda while nonmember nations were queuing up to join. And yet the reputations of these prophets are intact.

And things are not easy, conversely, for those who meet the apocalyptics and the theorists of the new age with skepticism. They sound callous at worst, and silly at best, if they question the strength of the economic phenomena that are so "obviously" defining and distressing the new epoch. The skeptics defy the fashions also in fields far from economics, in political theory, philosophy, international relations and sociology, where the assumption increasingly grows that we are now at a turning point in history, in which capitalism has produced a variety of grim to catastrophic consequences. There is an essential connection, we hear, between a lost sense of personal identity and a new anguish about economic prospects, between downsizing and bowling alone. The Global Age is seen even as a threat to democracy itself. We are warned that forces beyond democratic control are dominating economic life. Ralph Nader and others insist that international institutions are constraining and overturning the gains that grass-roots politics made on environmental and health issues: thus GATT, a creature of multinationals that have been routed in battles at the local level, devises agreements behind NGO backs that win the war for the corporations in an end-run around democracy.

So what is really going on? Three questions are begged by all this tumult. Is there really increased distress? If so, what is producing it? And what can we do about it?

II.

The different elements of distress need to be unbundled. Two main phenomena are now thought widely to be afflicting the economic world. On the one hand, the real wages of unskilled blue-collar labor appear to have declined through the 1980s and done not much better in the 1990s. On the other hand, the educated white-collar workers are considered to be vulnerable to job losses to an unprecedented degree. What are the facts?

The evidence for the decline in the wages of our unskilled, the blue-collar workers, is fairly robust. True, they have fallen less than we thought they would fall, when adjustments are made for the recent revision in the Consumer Price Index and for fringe benefits; but they have fallen nonetheless. And, whatever has caused our real wages to fall during the 1980s, and virtually to stagnate through most of the 1990s, appears to have obtained equally in Europe, adding to the high levels of unemployment there, since their labor markets are more "inflexible" than ours.

The Good Life and Its Discontents: The American Dream in the Age of Enlightenment 1945-1995
by Robert J. Samuelson
(Times Books, 293 pp., $25)

The End of Affluence: The Causes and Consequences of America's Economic Dilemma
by Jeffrey Madrick
(Random House, 223 pp., $22)

America Unequal
by Sheldon Danziger and Peter Gottschalk
(Harvard University Press, 220 pp., $15.95 paper)

The decline in real wages in the United States, moreover, has occurred against the backdrop of a rise in income inequality and wealth inequality, well documented by Ed Wolff of New York University and paralleled by studies for several other developed countries. The most recent estimates of income disparity in the United States, just released by the Census Bureau, suggest that the gap between the incomes of the rich and the poor, variously defined, has increased in the last quarter century, and most likely faster during the Clinton years. And yet this is not necessarily an explosive social situation, though it may offend egalitarian sensibilities.

What *does* matter is the coexistence of fallen and stagnant real wages at the bottom of the heap with conspicuous consumption at the top, with substantial remuneration of management (especially a downsizing management) at the workplace itself and with the sense that upward mobility is more and more rare. As Simon Schama has reminded us, the embarrassment of riches among the Dutch burghers provided capitalism with a human face: the burghers pursued wealth, creating prosperity, but the wealth was not spent on personal self-indulgence. It is hard to imagine anything resembling the spirit of Calvinism or Puritanism defining the lives that are described in the style sections of our newspapers.

I suspect that the new visual technologies that bring the lavish consumption of the rich and the super-rich into our homes do not merely satisfy vicarious appetites. For the many who have been experiencing economic difficulties even as the economy has continued to grow, our culture of spectacle feeds frustration and resentment instead. It is the sense that you cannot improve your station, that you cannot get at the higher income, consumption, and wealth that you see others enjoy, that is the ultimate problem, since it undermines the unique basis of American capitalism. Capitalism survives best when it encourages accumulation *and* restraint, and also an abundance of altruism; or when, despite unequal outcomes, it offers the equality of opportunity that we call, sentimentally but appropriately, the American Dream.

In recent years, the impression has become widespread that one's probability of getting up to a higher rung of the income ladder has declined. And this feeling of futility, though it is exaggerated, is not entirely out of line when checked against the statistics. Peter Gottschalk—who, with Sheldon Danziger, has written a careful analysis of poverty and inequality in the United States—argued recently that, of the five contemporary studies of earnings and income mobility in the United States, using longitudinal data that trace incomes over time, two suggest that the trend is down, while three indicate that there is no trend. In none of the studies, however, is there any indication of improved upward mobility, of an increase in income level that would soften the blow from stagnant wages.

But if all this is dismal, it is not the whole picture. There are countervailing developments that should bar us from despair. For a start, the media, for which bad news is good news, often overplays the notions that good jobs are disappearing, that the new service-sector jobs

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doom us to a destiny of hamburger flippers, that we are now "overworked" Americans making two ends meet by holding down three jobs. The Council of Economic Advisers, in a brief but incisive study that was held back for some time as the administration's political advisers confronted the obvious difficulty in reconciling Clinton's desire to feel American pain with Clinton's desire to show results, has dealt a mortal blow to these ideas. In particular, the report shows that the vast majority of net new jobs—that is, the jobs produced minus the jobs destroyed—created during the early 1990s are full-time rather than part-time, that nearly two-thirds of the jobs created between February 1994 and February 1996 were in sectors and occupations that paid above-average wages and that the share of workers holding multiple jobs has remained approximately constant since the late 1980s.

Moreover, we know from the work of the labor economist Henry Farber that people who are permanently displaced, including those caught up in the infamous downsizing at big corporations, are not facing a bleaker prospect of finding a new job now than in the early 1980s (though we should not forget that those were less prosperous years). The wrenching stories of the downsized managers who wound up bagging groceries or delivering liquor to their neighbors have no counterpart in statistical reality: the average reduction in wages earned during 1981 to 1993 by the displaced was a sad, but not devastating, 14 percent.

To understand at a deeper level why the public has nonetheless fallen prey to overblown complaints about the vanishing American Dream, we could do no better than read Robert Samuelson's shrewd and optimistic book. It combines first-rate economic analysis with persuasive historical, political and sociological insights. Samuelson, too, destroys some gloomy stereotypes, among the more melodramatic being that, as Juliet Schor argued in her much-cited book *The Overworked American* (1992), the American worker today is overworked and overstressed. Samuelson cites data from a later study that show that this conclusion was "simply wrong," because "women work more on jobs, but the increase is fully offset by doing less homework. Men's working hours have remained roughly stable."

Samuelson's main contribution is his argument that we are the victims of a revolution of rising expectations. The prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s, says Samuelson, was set against the memory of the devastation of the Great Depression, and the austerity of the Second World War and its subsequent anxieties; and it unleashed a sense of exaggerated optimism about the future and about government's ability to keep us steady and rising upwards with the aid of Keynesian economics and a confident new tribe of economists. But there were forces working the other way. The economists' conspicuous failure to fine-tune the economy and to eliminate the scourge of recession, the emerging trade-off between inflation and employment that made the earlier goal of a low-unemployment economy yield to the notion of the higher "natural" rate of unemployment, and the slower growth of GNP since the 1970s, in the post-OPEC era—all these phenomena contrasted sharply with the immediate past of great optimism, producing the exaggerated pessimism that afflicts us today. We are doing better, but we are not doing as well as we thought we would be doing. For this reason, there is immoderate unhappiness where there should be moderate happiness.

Samuelson also assigns a small role in this complicated story to the indirect effects of slow growth: less growth implies less revenues, and less revenues put a damper on the growth of public spending on entitlement programs, even as the demands for such expenditures increase sharply. But Samuelson does not see in slow growth the root of all evil. By contrast, Jeffrey Madrick's shallow book is crippled not merely by an utterly implausible technological explanation of what has caused economic growth to be slow since the early 1970s, but also by a simplistic surrender to economic determinism.

Madrick would have us believe that if only growth since the 1970s had been higher, our problems would have disappeared. Consider this strange assertion: "Our health-care expenditures, our fastest-growing major expense, would have been more affordable if we had continued to grow at the historic [that is, faster] rate." This is good arithmetic, but it is bad economics. Suppose that expensive new technology is invented to attack cardiovascular disease. GNP should grow with this invention since growth reflects "fundamentals" such as capital accumulation and technical change. But if the healthcare system is set up in such a way that most patients cannot be denied the benefits of the best technology, the increased medical expenditures can outstrip substantially the greater economic growth and revenues. Indeed, there is no dispute that this is partly what explains the recent explosion in medical expenditures.

Or consider, from Madrick's book, this outrageous claim:

> Slow economic growth may increasingly set old pensioners against young workers, homeowners against renters, suburbs against cities, natives against immigrants, light-skinned Americans against dark-skinned ones, debtors against creditors, and those with power, by virtue of their own wealth or their paid representation in Washington, against those who have none.

Really! Madrick's illusion that all bad things go together is the flip side of the illusion, the old liberal illusion, that all good things go together, and so we are in danger of civil war, or civil wars.

III.

But all, as I say, is not well. In a survey last summer that asked respondents to choose between "the opportunity to succeed" and "security from falling," 88 percent of those 18 to 29 years old chose the former, a distinct difference from the older generation's response. This is inevitable, perhaps: the young tend to seek opportunity, variety and change, and to dread the prospect of being stuck in lifetime jobs, while older workers see difficulty in change and seek continuity. Still, the latter group's preference may well have been accentuated as the displacement rates have increased for them and created a more acute sense of insecurity. Indeed, insecurity about jobs may be properly seen as increasing if people begin to feel, for good reasons (such as the strong presence of foreign competition), that the probability of holding onto jobs has diminished even if few displacements have actually occurred. So something has indeed changed. The pessimists are not entirely hallucinating. The real wages of the unskilled have fallen. The job insecurity of the skilled has increased, as their displacement rates have risen.

But why are we ailing in this way? There are two answers to the question about causes, two schools of thought. There are those who adduce domestic factors such as technological change, and those who blame the Global Age. But the decline in real wages is to be explained, I believe, as overwhelmingly the product of unskilled-labor-saving technological progress. We are down the wrong track if we worry about the global economy—specifically, about the increase of American trade with, and American investment in, developing countries south of our border and elsewhere. And yet the question of job insecurity does have much to do with the Global Age. Let me explain.

Consider the decline in the real wages

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of the unskilled. The evidence that globalism—in the form of trade with, and investment in, poor countries—is a significant cause of this decline is not compelling. Those who think otherwise do not come to grips with a central fact: if such trade is at the heart of the explanation, then the import prices of the labor-intensive goods should have fallen relative to those of other skilled-labor-using goods. For that is the mechanism by which, obviously, the pressure on real wages of labor would arise. But all serious researchers now agree that this was not the case in the 1980s, when the real wages of unskilled labor fell in the United States. In fact, if you look at the behavior of the prices of labor-intensive goods in the 1970s, when real wages kept rising, they actually fell. Thus, when prices of labor-intensive goods were falling (in the 1970s), real wages kept rising; and when they were rising, real wages fell.

This is not as surprising as one might think. After all, the intuition that falling prices of the goods that one produces will necessarily prevent one from sharing in the gains from trade sounds like common sense. But, as Wolfgang Stolper and Paul Samuelson showed half a century ago, it takes heroic assumptions to turn that intuition into an iron law. Economic theorists typically gain recognition by proving a "possibility" theorem which overturns the notion that something is unprovable, or by proving an "impossibility" theorem which overturns the view that something may be possible. The Stolper-Samuelson theorem, that the real wage of labor could be shown *necessarily* to fall when the price of labor-intensive goods fell, belonged to the former class; there were few economists for whom the notion was anything more than a theoretical curiosity.

One need not be an economist to grasp the argument that falling prices of labor-intensive goods can increase the real wage of labor. Consider that my wage at work falls because shoes, textiles, toys, and other labor-intensive goods fall in price. But then I may also be spending a lot of my income to buy these goods, so that my gains as a consumer outweigh my losses as a worker, leaving my "real" wage and my economic welfare higher. As it happens, working people do spend a much higher portion of their budget on such goods than, say, an average reader of this magazine. Again, increased international competitive pressure could snap our industry into greater efficiency, as the Japanese did for Detroit: all productive factors then profit from the increased efficiency. Increased economies of scale in production as freer trade expands markets could also profit all factors. Indeed, modeling the effects of NAFTA in this fashion, the economists Drusilla Brown, Alan Deardorff and Robert Stern had calculated during the debate on NAFTA that its passage would improve, not worsen, our workers' real wages.

I should add that the popular nightmare that our unskilled workers are destined to be swamped by rapidly expanding supplies of labor-intensive products, made in "gigantic" countries such as China and India, ignores two elementary facts. China and India are large; but their economic size, which is the relevant statistic, is not so large. The United States, on some estimates of national income, is six times the size of India and three times the size of China. A "large" rate of growth of supply in the poor countries can be absorbed without difficulty by a "small" rate of growth of rich-country demand. Besides, the world is a continuum of exporters and importers of labor-intensive products, and countries move from one role to another as time passes and incomes change. Hence there is no reason to think that expansion of Chinese and Indian supply of labor-intensive goods will necessarily take place in American markets, or for that matter in the traditionally rich OECD country markets, exclusively.

Indeed, as the Australian economist Ross Garnaut has shown, the ratio of net exports to world imports of labor-intensive manufactures has indeed risen dramatically in the last decade (from negligible levels to roughly 14 percent) for China, but it has simultaneously and symmetrically fallen (from about 14 percent down to virtually zero by 1994) in East Asia, so that the Chinese expansion of such manufactures has been absorbed during the 1980s mainly within the Asian region itself, thus avoiding substantial pressure on structural adjustment in the "old industrial countries." Aggregating these countries into a "South" or an "East" that will come at us like gangbusters is an ugly fallacy that ignores how countries progress up a ladder in comparative advantage.

Thus the argument about trade with poor countries producing paupers in our midst is hard to sustain empirically. And so is the contention that investment is also such a source of the distress of our unskilled. During the 1980s, the United States received more direct foreign investment than it sent out. And if we look at all foreign investment as the flip side of our current account deficit, then we also received net investment. The conclusion is inescapable: economic integra-

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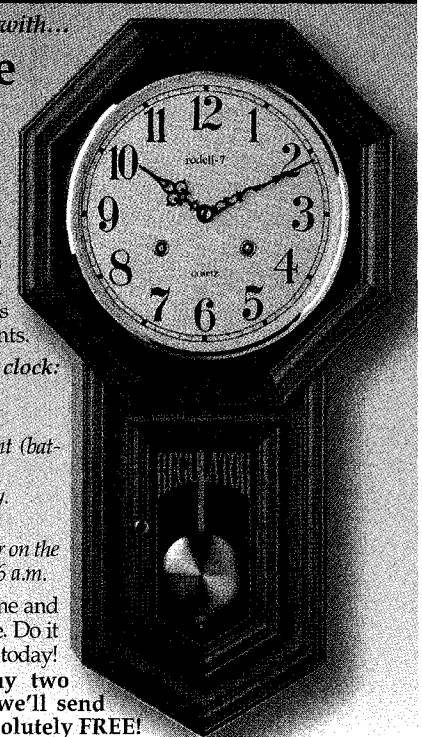

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tion with the South does not lie at the core of the difficulty facing our unskilled; and the obvious culprit then has to be unskilled-labor-saving technological change.

But isn't this technological change itself prompted by global competition? Some analysts, such as Ethan Kapstein, think so, but they are wrong. If global integration with the South is driving wages down, then the resulting technological change should be biased toward increasing the use of the cheaper labor. What we see is the opposite. The tendency of technological change is to diminish the reliance on cheaper labor.

I am not suggesting that the Global Age makes no difference in our economic life. Quite the contrary. The Global Age is increasingly, and in a systematic and systemic fashion, beginning to change the landscape in a way that contributes to job insecurity. We have to reckon with what is popularly described as increased foreign competition. More precisely, what we are facing now is a new and steadily encroaching economic universe in which the nature of comparative advantage is becoming thin, volatile, kaleidoscopic and creating vulnerabilities for industries, firms and workers.

In world trade and world investment, there are now greater transactions and greater flows. Trade in goods and services has continued to grow faster relative to national incomes throughout the postwar period. More pertinently, the share of trade within the (hugely tradable) merchandise and primary goods sectors has grown perceptibly, compared to the prewar and the immediate postwar levels. By the 1980s, as the economic historian Douglas Irwin has noted, there was a vast increase in the exposure of tradable industries to international competition: a situation that was more true of primary industries in the prewar period but now characterizes most manufactures today. The substantial exposure to international competition, the fact that few industries today can pretend that they are immune from international competition: this reality is making itself more and more keenly felt.

The continuing integration of the world's financial markets, the increased transnationalization of production by multinationals, and the convergence in technological ability among the OECD countries, have all combined to make competition among firms across nations fierce. Companies in different countries can avail themselves of similar technologies, borrow at similar interest rates and produce where it pays a little more to do so, in a manner which was difficult only a decade ago. The margins of competitive advantage have, therefore, become thinner: a small shift in costs somewhere can now be deadly to your competitiveness. We used to call such industries "footloose"; the ability to hold on to them was fragile, as the "buffer," or margin of competitive advantage, was not substantial. In the old days, few considered such industries to be the norm. Today they are the norm.

There is no better proof of this sense of increased vulnerability in international competition, reflecting what I have called the "kaleidoscopic comparative advantage" of the Global Age, than the fact that firms (the managements and the workers) are increasingly tempted to look over their foreign rivals' shoulders to see if differences in their domestic policies and their domestic institutions are giving them that extra edge in competition which then amounts to "unfair trade." This growing perception of the new volatility of economic advantage also animates all the "fair trade" demands to harmonize the institutions and the policies of other countries with the institutions and the policies of our own, so as to impose "equal burdens" and to "level the playing field," and the lobbying to raise environmental and labor standards in developing countries, and our continuing "system friction" with Japan.

Increased international competition, I suspect, also explains to a degree the tendency to displace older, educated workers, and hence also the general rise in documented displacement rates during 1980 to 1993. The decision to let these workers go, in favor of younger educated workers, may have to do with technical change to which the older generation has not adapted. But there is also a more subtle reason why firms let such people go. This is the labor-market theory that explains why firms rationally prefer wages below productivity early in an employee's tenure, and wages above productivity later in that employee's tenure: it encourages workers to stay at the firm, minimizing voluntary quits. But then the only thing that prevents a firm from firing its senior workers, thus collecting what economists call "rent" (it is better described as a rip-off) from these workers, is simply the "reputation costs" that would stigmatize the firm as an unreliable employer that cheats you out of your greater-than-your-current-productivity wages in the later years. The loss in reputation if the firm cheats is what prevents it from breaking this "implicit contract" between it and its employees; but if a firm can say, "I would love to keep you, but international competition leaves me with no choice but to fire you," it may keep its reputation intact. Yet this phenomenon may not last long, as workers increasingly seek to negotiate explicit contracts to avoid this unpleasant outcome.

IV.

The pressure on wages at the bottom is overwhelmingly due to domestic technological change, and the job insecurity in the middle and at the top is primarily due to the Global Age. Clearly we need a far-seeing, unpanicked intellectual and institutional response to these new circumstances. And such a response is precisely what we are not getting. Instead we have the rampant delusions of isolationism and intrusionism.

The isolationists come in a few varieties. There is, of course, Patrick Buchanan. His prescription, when it is not simply an appeal to nativist prejudice, is that we withdraw from the external threat and hide behind protection, even at our own economic expense. The "moderate" protectionists do not like nativist politics (though they are not above the politics of resentment); they would like to halt the further freeing of trade with poor countries, in the spirit of James Goldsmith's suggestion that we practice free trade only with "like-wage" countries so as to protect the wages of our workers. The "extreme" protectionists would like to unravel even existing trade treaties, such as NAFTA. Moderately or extremely, they propose that we close the door to freer trade with poor countries, denying them and ourselves the certain benefits of a more open economy.

If you are a great power, another response is available to you, the one I call intrusionism. Interest groups concerned about competitiveness may get the American government to cajole, bamboozle, or punish other nations into adopting policies that limit the competition that is the glory of the Global Age. This may not work too well when we face off against other rich and powerful countries: our attempts to force Japan into abandoning its institutional structures have generally failed, except when domestic forces within Japan already leaned in the desired direction. When we face the poor countries of the South, however, we can speak less softly and carry a bigger stick. And we can mobilize as our allies the other rich nations that share our objective. Thus, we have witnessed the recent growth of "unfair trade" demands addressed to the poor nations, including the establishment and increase of minimum wages: this would raise the production costs of our rivals in these poor countries to levels that make their competition more tolerable.

Intrusionism is no less of a chimera than isolationism. It seeks to restrain trade, but from the other end: it is tanta-

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mount to "export protectionism." The problem is that the foolishness of intrusionism is less transparent. This is partly because those concerned with competitiveness are often allied with groups that seek to advance the legitimate, moral agendas that set us apart from many other nations. The latter groups perhaps act on John Stuart Mill's remark that no great cause was advanced without someone's special interest being mixed up in it. But they are wrong.

For the anti-competition lobbies have weakened the moral agenda by selectively tilting it against the poor nations and shielding the rich nations, and by linking it closely to trade access instead of advancing it in other ways that are more effective. Thus, our demands for a "social clause" at the World Trade Organization, making conformity to it a precondition for market access, have been reduced to an emasculated "core." The right to unionize and to bargain collectively is included—but then why omit strictures on the restrictions on secondary boycotts and on the practice of hiring replacement workers, both of which can cripple the strikes of workers and have helped reduce American unions to a membership of less than 12 percent of the workforce? Again, there is nothing about sweatshops, rampant in our garment manufacture, or about the rights of migrant workers, who are often subject to abject abuse here, if investigative television reports are to be believed. The heavy hand of "export protectionism" is all too manifest here. And it arouses strong objections from poor countries, who suspect that the Clinton administration is disguising American interests as American values.

Those values are better advanced instead by the political and financial support of the numerous and growing NGOs, both here and abroad, that work ceaselessly to nudge the world in the right direction. Appropriate international institutions such as the ILO on labor rights, and the UNICEF on rights in the Convention of the Child, could be assigned to produce systematic and periodic reviews of member states' conformity to these conventions. This in turn might enable governments to use public censure, and NGOs to use campaigns, labeling and boycotts to shame and pressure firms and nations, both poor and rich symmetrically, to change their offending ways. Used in this way, today's "civil society" can be a very powerful instrument of change. But the Clinton administration, whose public silence over China's egregious violations of human rights is deplorable, has embraced intrusionism, instead in the shape of the social clause—a bone thrown to the unions in an abandonment of genuine commitment to the cause of human rights, and a surrender to export protectionism.

Trade is not the cause of declining real wages; it likely improves them. The Luddite solution to the problems of the unskilled is similarly flawed. (Such a solution has been brilliantly debunked by Steven Marcus in these pages.) The solution to the economic problem that is distressing us has to lie, rather, in a domestic institutional response: in more and different governmental action and architecture, designed so that we can profit less painfully from the new age. The political scientist John Ruggie wrote in 1982 of what he called "embedded liberalism," arguing that the New Deal had embedded liberalism of the marketplace into the "social order," making it tolerable and survivable. The same argument, Ruggie suggested, could be extended to the integration of nations into the world economy.

The flux and adjustment costs seen to be imposed by forces beyond the nation-state create a particularly acute demand for state relief. The communitarian legitimacy of such relief is plain. I have long argued for the creation of institutional support mechanisms to ease the consequences of, and hence to facilitate, the decline and the exit of firms in the context of a vastly more integrated world economy; the most compelling such institution would be the provision of adjustment assistance. Robert Reich, along those lines, has insisted on workers' retraining and educational upgrading. In a time of accelerating technological advancement, enhancing the acquisition of skills through educational reforms, including vouchers, is the right kind of thinking.

Moreover, in a world in which we now have fewer and possibly vanishing jobs with the conventional probability of long tenure, we need to break the tight and time-honored linkages between employment and the benefits that provide basic needs. This problem is especially acute in our provision of health care, which has been tied to employment by a quirk of wartime. As long-held jobs become scarcer, however, young workers also need to become more adept at the art of planning their future, since pensions and other benefits in the package traditionally provided by one's long-term employers have also become increasingly rare. One is now more likely to plan for retirement on one's own.

Institutions often evolve in response to needs. But will they evolve without the state steering in the necessary direction? And, even then, will they evolve fast enough? Only a romantic belief in the virtue of laissez faire, and a cynical disbelief in the capacity of useful state action, can lead one to answer these questions in the affirmative. Besides, a state that stands aside as society is a state that is hobbling itself. It is also a careless and callous state, lacking in the empathy that has been a historical characteristic of our essentially generous society. We must not cast doubt upon the legitimacy, and the necessity, of state action. We must remember what the market-only libertarians among the Republicans have forgotten: that extending a hand, even bearing a few gifts, to the poor, and more generally to the victims of social and economic dislocation, is not merely good for the soul. It is also good for the polity. The Global Age is no time for anti-government politics in America. •

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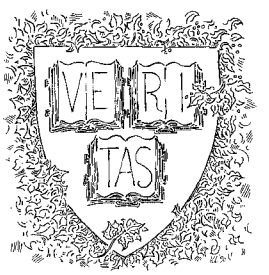
Forward and back

ALGERIA LIES JUST ACROSS THE Mediterranean from Marseilles. It should be, to borrow a phrase, under Western eyes. After all, we are well enough aware of the dreadful happenings in far more remote Rwanda and Zaire. (True, we don't seem able to do anything about them. But at least we know.) About Algeria, I'm not sure we want to know. Its history since the French withdrawal in 1961 is, in any case, encrusted with romantic—and false—memory. For many, many years, liberal-minded Western academics suggested that from the terror of the French colonialist *pieds noirs* had emerged a nonaligned, modern, accountable and democratic Third World state. Here is how Ian S. Lustick, professor of the social sciences at the University of Pennsylvania, characterized the process: "the national solidarity produced by collective suffering and triumph was a dependable basis for nearly three decades of rule by the political class ... this solidarity was itself an impressive achievement."

ONLY A LEFT-WING JEW, WITH HIS predilection for romanticizing revolution, could have written such a sentence. In fact, Algeria's political class was, and is, cruel and corrupt. It squandered an oil inheritance that could have left it a developed country. And it depends today for its survival, as it has for decades, not on national "solidarity" but on fear. To be sure, the regime can now use the threat posed by a brazen and murderous Islamicist intifada to rationalize its brutalities. But those brutalities, carried out by masked killers called "ninjas," preceded the current civil war. The National Liberation Front came to power by force, it governed by force, and that is the way its heirs have chosen to address the challenge from political Islam.

NOT THAT THE ISLAMICIST OPPOSITION is in better touch with enlightenment sensibilities. For years now, the Islamic Salvation Front has routinely sent its representatives into towns whose populations are insufficiently pious and slit the throats of the offenders. Ninety-three throats here, fifty-one throats there, café bombings and car bombings, barbarism upon barbarism without end. This is the movement to which Warren Christopher's State Department suggested, a few years back, we might offer an olive branch. No American newspaper has a correspondent in Algiers. So we get whatever news seeps out. The French press is a bit more aggressive. From it we learn that the thin veneer of civilization that protects women and infants in war has disappeared. There have been gruesome ritual murders of women. Sexuality is a more than ordinarily fraught matter among these Muslim faithful, and the militants are incensed by what they view as a legacy of the alien French: emancipated women. So eradicationalists man both sides of Algeria's ideological divide. And the citizenry cowers between the unspeakable terror of the religious and the unspeakable counterterror of the state.



SINCE SEPTEMBER 1996, *The New Criterion* has been looking monthly at "the future of the European past." The ongoing series began with a learned and gloomy essay by David Pryce-Jones. It argued, rightly I believe, that, since almost no one is shocked anymore by what has been produced by this century's totalitarian history, shock is sought in art. Seven subsequent essays—each on a different topic but sharing a not altogether different sensibility—lament the present principled ignorance of the European legacy and the rage for strange gods outside it. Ironically, the most hopeful trope comes from Yale classicist John Herington, who sees in the energetic enterprise of translation and in the recordings of the great epics, like Robert Fagle's English rendering of both *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, signs of both scholarly survival and scholarly revival. Edited by Hilton Kramer, *The New Criterion* is politically conservative and artistically modernist, a none too common set of attributes. While the magazine does not take on the philistines of the right, it has done valiant battle against the philistines, center and left, anointed by foundations and the media as tribunes of the good.

I HAPPEN TO SHARE SOME OF THE journal's fixations. For instance, that liberalism must admit—and ponder—that at critical junctures it, or much of it, bedded down with communism for fear that it would miss the future. Still, *The New Criterion* is more an old-fashioned intellectual's publication than a political tract. It is the essays on Degas and Bertrand Russell, on the Guggenheim and Anna Akhmatova, on T.E. Lawrence and Robert Venturi (and a stunning piece on Harold J. Laski by Edward Shills) which truly please and surprise. Most of these are political only in that today it seems to be a political statement to have exacting standards for what is good. *The New Criterion* has been publishing for fifteen years, and I've been a contented reader from the first issue.

I TOLD A FRIEND THAT MY CHILdren have subscriptions to *The Forward*. "*The Forward*?" he exclaimed. "I thought it died years ago." I remembered the old joke about the editor of the Yiddish newspaper. He sees a funeral cortège pass under his office window and moans, "oy, another reader." Well, *The Forward* is the very hip English-language weekly edition of the decidedly un-hip *Forverts*. And *Forverts* is the Yiddish-language weekly edition of the newspaper which was a daily for eighty-six years. In its heyday, it had the largest foreign-language circulation in America. Despite a declining readership and a slowly expiring cohort of writers, *Forverts* is celebrating its hundredth anniversary this year. My parents did not read the socialist (but fervently anti-communist) *Forverts*; they read the Zionist daily, *Der Tog* (The Day), which was more intellectually demanding of its readers and published literary criticism at an extraordinarily high level. But I've read about *Forverts* and read the paper itself. Moreover, a student of mine at Harvard, Jeremy Dauber, now a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, did a senior honors thesis two years ago on the "Bintel Brief," the advice column in *Forverts* and one of the first advice columns in America. To its readership of immigrants, this column, and the paper generally, preached socialism and assimilation to American ways. Its socialism failed. But assimilation succeeded, big time. The present Yiddish edition has some 10,000 subscribers, down from more than 300,000; the English *Forward* has 28,000, up from nothing. (The newly created, and non-socialist, Russian edition has a circulation of over 4,000.) A hundred years ago, probably 80 to 90 percent of the Jews of Europe and America spoke Yiddish as their mother tongue. Hitler put an end to that, and so did democratic citizenship. Of course, a hundred years ago, almost no Jews spoke Hebrew. Now half the Jews of the world do ... or can. Yiddish will not again be the tongue of the masses. But its literature and lore will live in translation, in scholarship and in the ongoing search for Jewish meaning. It will also enjoy a half-life in the vulgarities of American popular culture. But that's another matter.

MARTIN PERETZ

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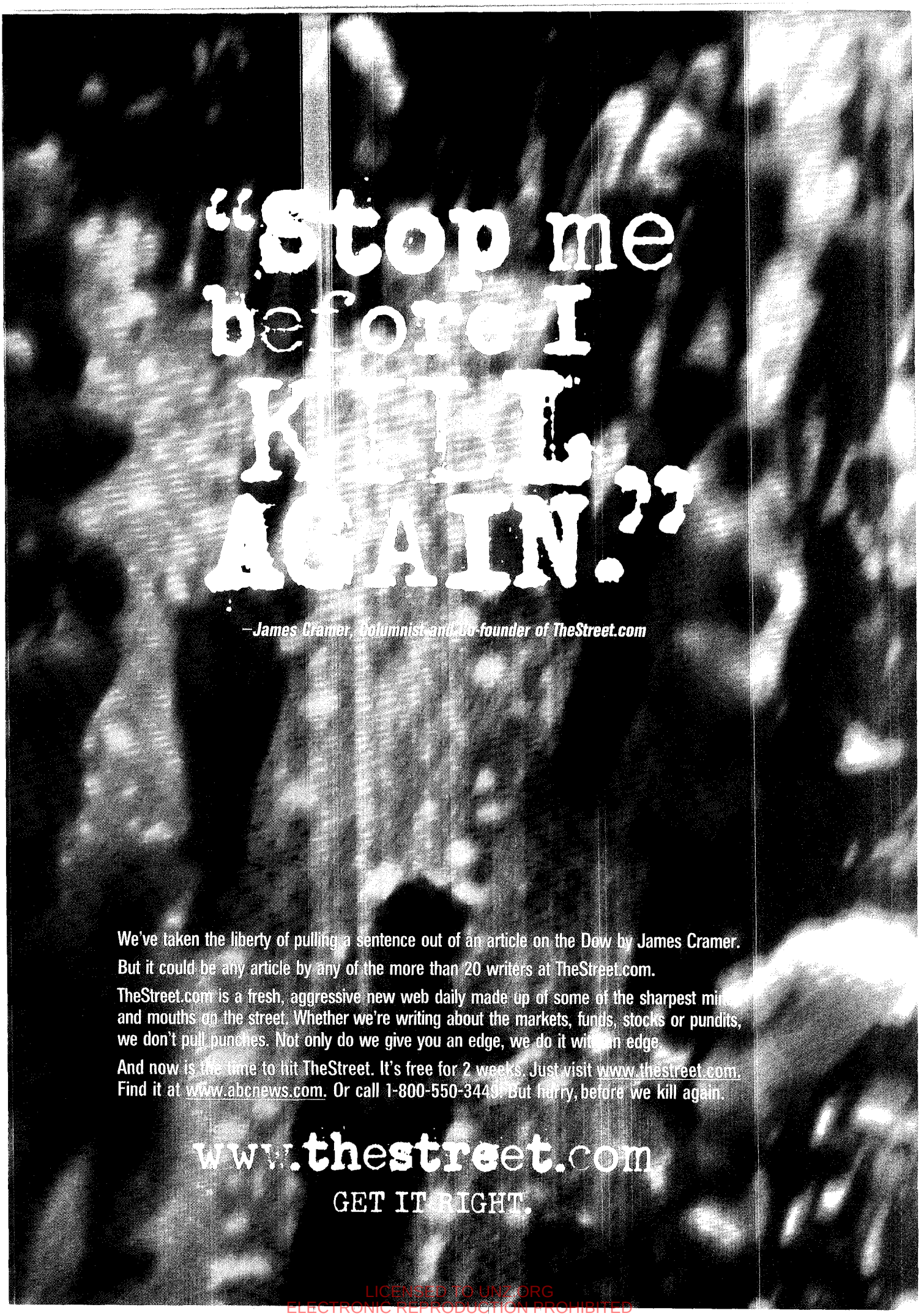
"stop me
before I
KILL
AGAIN."
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